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Then, on tiptoe, he advanced to the desk, and cautiously drew forth the parchment Herndon had placed there a few minutes before.

HOODWINKED; OR, DEAD AND ALIVE.

A TALE OF MAN'S PERFDY AND WOMAN'S FAITH.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR.,

Author of "Ralph Hamon, the Chemist," "The Warning Arrow," etc.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DEADLY PASTILE.

When night set in—a night as beautiful in its starry radiance as had been the glorious days; while the full golden moon poured down her soft rays through foliaged trees and on the sleeping flowers—nine o'clock had come, and Calvert Herndon sat alone in his library wrapt in the perusal of sundry documents, which he took from, and returned to, successively, and alternately, the desk of many pigeon-holes before him.

After awhile, he took up a manuscript that bore a fresher look than the others, and as he read this, an apparent emotion was traced upon his features.

"Ah!" he mused, "who would have dreamed that, in Doctor Brandt, a man I have esteemed and trusted for years, and made my confidant, I would discover so base a hypocrite! I had chosen him my executor, and imagined that my choice was good. Providence has certainly smiled upon me, in unmasking him, ere my little Pauline lived without a father. Had my money and estate once passed into his control, I fear my child would have existed miserably in the cold world. Now, I hurried about the preparation of this last will; have it witnessed correct; and in the event of my death, Pauline and Victor are well provided for. I had foreseen that she loved young Hassan."

He slipped the parchment back into its pigeon-hole, and then leaned upon the arm-rests of his chair, becoming absorbed in reverie. As the moments floated by, his eyelids grew heavy; his head drooped upon his breast; he slept. The house was silent. No sounds were heard in hall or passage. The servants had retired; an ominous stillness prevailed.

Suddenly, in the glimmering gaslight, a face appeared above the sill of the open window. Then followed a pair of shoulders, and a man gazed in.

Assuring himself that the merchant was oblivious to his presence, the intruder swung lightly into the room, and stood motionless, to see if his advent had disturbed Herndon's slumber. Then, on tiptoe, he advanced to the desk, and cautiously drew forth the parchment Herndon had placed there a few minutes before. Placing it in his pocket, he turned, stooped down, and hurriedly gathered up the slips and bits of the mutilated will, which lay where they had been

thrown in the morning. These were also placed in his pocket. Pausing for a second, to again make sure he had not been discovered, the intruder went to the merchant's side, and exercising an art that would have done credit to a practical pickpocket, purloined from the sleeper's person a number of letters. One of these he kept and returned the others to their place.

Another glance at Herndon's face—immobile in its deep repose—and he produced a tiny pastile, fired the pointed cone, and set it upon the desk.

This done, he returned to the window, swung quietly out, catching the bough of a majestic tree which had been the means of his entrance and exit, and slid to the ground. The pastile burned; a minute wreath of blue smoke slowly ascended, and soon a fragrant aroma began to fill the apartment. At first, this was pleasant, but as it increased, and the atmosphere grew denser, the inhalation assumed a suffocating odor, which thickened till the senses sickened under it.

Herndon slept on. The pastile burned lower and lower. The cloud of vapor became cloying in its curious smell.

The merchant's respiration sounded heavier as he unconsciously breathed the obnoxious perfume. His face gradually whitened; he moved restlessly.

Suddenly came a twitching of the nerves; the jaw dropped; the breathing ceased.

The pastile now lay in an ashen heap, while its smoke floated slowly toward the window and out upon the pure night air, where it evaporated completely.

The night passed on, as if naught had happened to mar its solitude, and when again the bright sun mounted to the heavens, those who bustled about the grand Home Mansion, dreamed not of the dread discovery that was in store.

Pauline, looking lovely as the morn itself, was seated at one of the long, low, vine-clad windows in the parlor, gazing out upon the grass and flowers as they swayed in the mild, scented breeze. Her face was expressive of a silent yearning. Victor Hassan, contrary to her expectations, and his own promises, had not called again to see her on the afternoon of the day previous. Had he forgotten her?

"Pshaw!" she murmured, within herself, "I am foolish. Some unexpected business duty detained him." Yet, she wished he had come, despite all other pressing engagements.

By and by, her musings fell into another channel. She thought of what had happened between her father and Doctor Brandt; she remembered the angry dialogue, to which she had been a patient listener; and finally, as she reflected the more, she wondered in proportion, as to what had given rise to this abrupt enmity between them. Doctor Brandt, she knew, had always occupied a position of highest esteem, in the eyes of her father; and the affair seemed more than ever strange, owing to the fact that Calvert Herndon had volunteered no explanation of the difficulty.

Her reveries were broken by the sound of a light footfall on the rich carpet, and quickly turning, she was amazed at sight of Harrison Blair, who twirled his glossy mustache between his fingers, smiled blandly, bowing as he remarked:

"You seem to enjoy solitude, Miss Pauline."

"Solitude is, at all times, preferable to the society of those whom we dislike," was her cold rejoinder, resuming her absent study of the spacious grounds.

"You are looking very charming this morning," he continued, not displaying an inclination to notice the hint that his presence was disagreeable; but as she made no return to this, he went on:

"You also portray, in your pretty face, most perfect health. How is Mr. Herndon this morning? I have not had the pleasure of seeing him yet."

"Nor have I," she replied, briefly, not deigning to notice his impudent liberty of speech, which contained a more than simple flattery.

"And this Victor Hassan—I presume he is well? The devil generally takes care of his own."

She started to her feet. Did she dream? How dared he make use of such language, direct such words to her ear?

"Mr. Blair, you have overstepped all limit to gentility! What you can mean by, or expect to accrue from this persistent, ungentlemanly behavior, I am at a loss to imagine. You seem to forget that you are merely a guest within this house, and under obligations for the hospitality shown you. I shall no longer tolerate your impudence. I shall speak to my father, and have him order you to leave immediately! Let me pass."

"Nay, do not tear yourself away so hastily!" he interrupted, in tones of mock pleading, and stretching forth an arm to detain her. "I desire to whisper anew my burning love—the passion of my soul, the chiefest hope of my life. It is the sole ambition of my heart to beat in the knowledge that you can love me, and I can not give you up. Will you listen to me?"

"Let me pass, Mr. Blair," she requested, determinedly; "I will not undergo the trial of another scene like that which transpired in the arbor yesterday. I never can, never will love you; so, you may cease your importunities."

"You are cruel."

"I am just to my position and my conscience."

"You wring my heart purposely."

"If performing my duty toward myself wrings your heart, then you must suffer."

"Pauline, reconsider."

"Never!" she answered, firmly.

The word had scarce left her lips when a commotion was heard upon the stairs in the hall, at the door, and two of her household servants came running in, panting, out of breath, each striving, in broken syllables, to speak intelligibly.

"What is the matter?" inquired Pauline, surprisedly, gazing from one to the other.

"Oh! mistress," burst forth simultaneously, "master's dead!"

Pauline paled, but did not understand.

"Dead! Who?" was her hurried question.

"Why, the master—Mr. Herndon—your father, sure."

A sense of dizziness came over her; a haze swept across her vision; the room seemed whirling in a confused vortex.

"Dead!" was the involuntary exclamation.

"Impossible! How?"

"Yes, missus, it's true enough. We went into the library to dust up, thinkin', of course, he'd be anywhere else than there just now; but there he was, sure, a-sittin' in his big chair, like a ghost, an' we knew he was dead—"

With a pained cry, Pauline sprang past them and bounded up the broad staircase. The two girls, with mouths yawning, and eyes distended in wondering curiosity, ran after her; while the Englishman followed leisurely, twining and mingling his jeweled finger in the exquisitely oiled goatee upon his chin.

When he entered the library, nearly all the servants of the mansion were standing around, gazing and gazing upon the motionless form of the merchant.

Pauline, half crazed with sudden grief, clung round his neck, and plead in vain for a word, a sentence of recognition. But, the ear of Calvert Herndon was deaf, the lips sealed, the heart paralyzed; he heard not, spoke not.

At a command from the Englishman, the room was cleared with the exception of one man, who remained at a sign to that effect, and Blair, with his assistance, lifted the lifeless body and carried it to a bedroom, where they deposited it gently upon a soft couch. Pauline kept close by them, weeping bitterly, and apparently deprived of all self-governing power. Her heart had been rent and torn at once, when she looked upon her father—marked the ashen lips that had given utterance to endearing words only the day before.

It was so sudden, so terrible, so overwhelming, her young spirit was crushed from out the gay apparel of a buoyant existence, and hurled to the earth in deepest despair. It was a transit from the bright, blissful, sunny happiness of life to its, extreme opposite—sorrow, anguish, isolation. She was alone.

The serving-man withdrew, leaving her and Harrison Blair sole occupants of the room, besides the statue-like form upon the bed.

The Englishman stood close by her, as if to obtrude upon her sorrow. The pale face of the grief-stricken one was turned upon him, though her voice failed, and the tear-dimmed eyes spoke the beseeching volumes which the tongue refused.

More for policy than consideration for her heart-rending woe, he departed, closing the door after him. Descending to the lower hall, Blair ordered the private family carriage, and seated himself, impatiently, to wait.

When the mystified groom drew up the restless grays at the front door, he got inside the conveyance, saying: "Straight to Philadelphia. Drive to Doctor Brandt's office on Spruce street, below Tenth. Make haste!" and as the horses were whipped up to a quick pace, he sunk back amid the cushions.

A smile of diabolical satisfaction settled upon his handsome countenance; he patted his foot, and muttered inaudibly of what apparently afforded him considerable pleasure and hope.

CHAPTER V.

A SPIDER'S WEB.

DOCTOR BRANDT'S office was at his residence on Spruce street, below Tenth, near Madame Guillon's academy for ladies, and in one of those buildings which comprise Portico Row, with basement well suited to a lawyer or a physician; and on one of the shutters of the front basement room was tacked a sign:

GULICK BRANDT, M. D.

The doctor was in his office, having just returned from his customary morning round of visits to his patients, and a young lad, seated in a corner, watched his employer studiously as the latter stood at the window, thrumming upon the pane, and looking out at the passers-by. While thus mentally absorbed, a carriage drew up before the house which he recognized as being from the Home Mansion.

He frowned at first, but his brow cleared as Harrison Blair stepped out, and he saw that the Englishman was alone. In a moment Blair entered; was greeted cordially; invited to a chair.

"I believe this is the first time you have honored me with a call, Mr. Blair," remarked the physician, as they seated themselves. "Yes," was the rejoinder. "Do you live here?" leisurely removing his gloves, and taking a survey of the room.

"Well, yes. I rent a sleeping apartment up-stairs, and this office, from the family that occupies the house. Hope you are well to-day?"

"Yes, thank you. Are we alone?"

"Yes, John, leave us—you desire to speak with me privately, Mr. Blair?"

"If you please."

"And, John, if any one comes, have them leave their directions. You can remain outside till I call you."

When they were alone, Harrison Blair fixed himself comfortably, and gazing steadfastly at Brandt, said:

"Pretty—well—done—doctor. You did that little job to excellence—perfection—surely."

The physician looked at him in an incomprehensible way.

"Pretty well done? How pretty well done? What pretty well done? I don't see."

"Ha! ha! ha! he's dead enough this morning. You've got satisfaction!"

Brandt's eyes opened wider.

"Dead! who? Satisfaction for what? How satisfaction?"

"Ha! ha! no one would suspect it but me."

"Suspect? Explain."

"Why, there was quite a commotion at the Home mansion this morning, when Calvert Herndon was found dead in his library."

"Calvert Herndon dead!" exclaimed the physician, gazing incredulously at the other.

"Of course! I say you carried it out admirably," resumed the Englishman.

"How sudden this is!" continued Brandt, musingly. "I always thought him sound—free from hereditary disease—"

"Pshaw! what use is there in your playing this part? I give you credit for the cunning means you employed to kill him so effectually, and without leaving any traces of the deed."

"Calvert Herndon is dead. You think I murdered him?"

"Precisely; or rather, I know, instead of think it."

"Mr. Blair, you surely dream," but a chill coursed through his veins even as he spoke.

"No, I am wide awake."

"What can you mean? I murder him? Heavens! I quarreled with the man, I know, but I thought no more of him or the affair after I left his house."

"That would hardly be credited by any one," rejoined Blair, decidedly. "It is all clear as day to those who know of your secret quarrel. I happened to witness the deed."

There was a terrible calmness, or dread significance about the closing sentence which penetrated the physician's ear with cutting sharpness, notwithstanding its even utterance.

"You witnessed the act of murder—saw me do it!" and the face of the speaker was more like that of a ghost than mortal. "Am

I asleep or awake? This is a terrible charge! It is a nightmare—I dream. I can prove—"

He was about to say, he could prove that he had been in town throughout the whole night; but, suddenly remembering that he had returned his horse to the stable shortly before dark, and strolled leisurely about until the doors of the Walnut Street Theater were thrown open, when he went to that place of amusement. When he came home it was late; the family in the house where he resided had retired; he saw no one; no one saw him; it was impossible to prove otherwise than that he had spent a portion of the night either in Moyamensing, Richmond, or on the Germantown road.

"I do not think you can prove any thing," Doctor Blair replied. "For I saw you poison Calvert Herndon by means of a pastille of deadly odor. I have but to swear to that in court, couple the testimony of those who know of your late quarrel with the deceased, and it strikes me, you will either swing, or serve out the balance of your life in the penitentiary. Ha! ha! ha! you've made a miss and a hit at the same time—a hit in murdering your enemy, thus satisfying your insatiable honor; and you made a miss of it, in permitting me to see your every action. I don't see how you could well help it, however; of course you were not aware of my proximity."

The physician seemed deprived of power to articulate, remaining speechless and agast. Blair continued:

"As I said, though, nobody suspects. I am the only one who could get you into a deuced embarrassing difficulty. Now, I am not anxious to do any thing of that kind."

"But, Mr. Blair, I am innocent."

"Stuff! How far would your unbacked oath go in a court of law, with overwhelming evidence opposed? Don't you see you are in a tight place?"

Gulick Brandt hung his head with a groan. Here was a web woven around him, so tangled, mazy, intricate that he could not extricate himself. He acknowledged, inwardly, his scheme to obtain the money from Herndon, with the aid of Hawkins, the swindler, and had experienced all the natural elation at his defeat, and expulsion from the premises of a man whose confidant he had been for years. But, when charged with murder, it was a new and terrible phase! He trembled as he realized how utterly powerless he was to establish his innocence; that he was liable to the public ignominy of imprisonment—perhaps execution upon the gallows; and his freedom or bondage, life or death, was balanced on a scale in the hands of Hallison Blair.

The Englishman did not interrupt these thoughts. He was sufficiently versed to read, in part, what occupied the physician's mind, and while he watched the latter closely, a subtle smile, half-sneering, half-sardonic, yet expressive of triumph, wreathed the corners of his mouth. He held a power over Gulick Brandt. He had come there to make known that power, and to use it.

"Do you realize the peril of your situation?" Blair asked, as the wretched man looked up.

"Yes," was the broken reply. "Considering all you have said, I realize that I am utterly in your power. My life actually trembles in your keeping. But I am innocent—I swear it!"

"Hardly," was the malicious rejoinder, spoken with the air of one who feels a satisfaction in having surmounted the first difficulty in the path toward a desired accomplishment. Then he added, with emphasis:

"You are in my power, Gulick Brandt, but you are safe enough as long as we can work harmoniously together. My visit was for another object besides showing you that I am fully aware of your guilt."

For answer, Brandt vented a groaning sigh.

"I was a listener to all that passed between you and Herndon, yesterday. And, by the by, that letter he had in his pocket, which you wrote to Mr. Hawkins, of Boston, would have considerable weight against you, if placed in the hands of a smart lawyer. Fortunately for you, I have it."

"Ah! you have?"

"Yes, safe enough. So you need apprehend no danger on that score—except through me. Now, doctor, Herndon had intended to name you as his executor. He tore up the will to that effect before your eyes."

"I was sorry for that."

"Certainly you were! But that matters nothing; you can still handle the Herndon estate if you are so minded."

"How?"

"Oh, I can manage it easily. Come, now, I make you this proposition: I will guarantee your being Calvert Herndon's executor; to have full charge of all that he leaves; promise to keep secret the fact of your having poisoned him with a pastille; in consideration for which you are to sustain and aid in every thing I may see fit to do."

"I do not understand," said Brandt.

"Then I will explain. I love Pauline Herndon with a passion next to idolatry. She loathes me. I am determined she shall be my wife. Aid me in this all you can—I ask nothing more—and I will make good the guarantee I have spoken."

Brandt reflected a moment, and then agreed to the proposition. He could not do otherwise. The alternative would be attended with fearful consequences.

"Very good," said Blair, when the other made answer. "Now, come. We'll go to the Home Mansion. You can decide upon Herndon's death as one from heart disease, and so report to the Board of Health. Come."

They left the office and seated themselves in the carriage, when, in obedience to instructions, the groom turned the horses' heads homeward. As they rolled along, the two discussed at length their alliance—an alliance forced upon the physician by stern fate, in which the dark shadow was Hallison Blair.

That Calvert Herndon might have died suddenly did not seem beyond the confines of probability; still it was strange, as no hereditary disease was known to exist in the family.

"But the most crushing consciousness to the mind of Gulick Brandt was that he was staring in the face with a charge of murder!"

He was mystified, as well as startled; he wondered how it was possible to implicate him in the occurrence.

Whatever were his thoughts, it was apparent to him that, despite all accusations to the contrary, he could be proven guilty, notwithstanding he was innocent! No use was there to struggle to combat the fated coil; he yielded to the dictates of one who now ruled with a power which his own knowledge of men told him was the power of fate.

In due time they arrived at the Home Mansion, and Blair immediately conducted the physician to the room in which lay Calvert Herndon.

Contrary to the Englishman's expectations, Pauline was not there. A servant, who lingered in the darkened apartment, informed him that she had retired to her boudoir and solitude.

"It is as well," he thought, stepping aside as Doctor Brandt bent over the motionless form upon the bed.

He had scarcely glanced at the apparently lifeless body, when he turned quickly and whispered: "Why, he is not dead!"

"Sh!" admonished Blair, noting that the servant was eagerly alert to catch their conversation; "he might as well be. A word from you will be sufficient to make every thing straight. No one but a medical practitioner could detect a spark of life in that cold form."

"Bury him alive!" exclaimed Brandt, instantly comprehending the other's meaning, though speaking still guardedly.

"Why not? What does it amount to? Nothing. You speak the word, and he is out of your path. The way is open for you to control great wealth. Why need you hesitate? Ah! it is too late now to think of resuscitating him. I would not permit it, and, in case of an effort in that direction, I would at once set the law-hounds upon your track."

The physician turned from him with a shudder. Should he obey the Englishman's command? Ah, he dreaded the exposure threatened, and he feared the glitter of those deep, dark eyes as they fixed upon him as the bird fears the glitter of the steel-like gleam of the deadly serpent. Yes, he intensely feared the man!

"I see all plainly," he said, aloud. "Mr. Herndon has died of heart disease. A sad case—very sad. Where did you say your mistress was?" This question to the sewing girl, whose eyes were dimmed with tears of grief at loss of a beloved master.

In her room, sir.

"Send her to me, in the parlor," ordered the physician, in a calm, grave voice. "I must, as is my duty, offer her consolation in this sorrowful moment."

The girl departed, and, no doubt, took opportunity on the way to communicate with her companions in the household, telling them what Doctor Brandt had said.

Hallison Blair smiled approvingly upon the physician.

"Well done, doctor—very cleverly spoken. Each a prize if you maintain well your part! Remember, I watch and wait!"

Then an unbroken silence reigned.

"I told her, sir," said the domestic, entering the room after a few moments' absence.

"Very well," returned Brandt. "You may remain here until I can relieve you."

The two men left the apartment. Outside the door, the physician passed, saying, somewhat hesitatingly: "Is it possible for you to produce a will which will appoint me executor?"

"Possible? Ha-ha! All things are possible with me! Do you see to it that a will is needed, by sending your intended victim to Laurel Hill Cemetery, and I'll see to it that you alone shall handle all his wealth."

They separated. Brandt descended the stairs, and, in the hall, summoned a male servant, whom he dispatched to the city for an undertaker.

This attended to, he entered the parlor to await Pauline.

CHAPTER VI.

A LETTER.

LIKE a rose deprived of sunlight, or its allotted attention at Nature's hands—the fair bud drooped despondently upon the tender stem—Pauline came into the room, her head hung, and the bright luster of her eyes marred by flooding tears which no effort could force back. Doctor Brandt greeted her with soothing words, taking her hand and leading her to a sofa, where he seated himself beside her.

"My dear," he said, mildly, "try and not give way to your grief so. Strive to bear up."

"Oh! I can not help it," she sobbed.

"How can I be calm under such a blow?"

"I am very, very sorry," continued he, "but this is one of those inevitable occurrences in which we have no right to question the motive of the Great Being in so willing."

"I know it. But oh! it is so hard. I wonder that I am not crazed. Have you ever known what it is to have a father die?"

How simple, how pointed, and yet how natural!

Brandt was silent. Here was a question, a home-thrust, sinking deep into the recesses of his heart, which for a moment unmanned him. Yes, he had known the sorrow incident to witnessing the passage from this life to death's cold embrace of a loved parent—ay, father and mother in turn. Pauline had struck a tender chord, and the first impulse created in the emotion aroused by her inquiry, was to tell her that her father was not dead, and that he might be saved.

But, in the same flash of thought, came the dark shadow commanding him—the dread monitor who haunted his soul like a terror—a vision of the Englishman checked the utterance upon his lips—words that could have turned Pauline's mourning into happiness, and he said, instead:

"Yes, my dear, I have known the pang, and I can, therefore, fully sympathize with you. But you must master your feelings as much as possible. Though you have lost a loving and beloved parent, you still have kind friends to comfort you in this bereavement."

"I feel sure—I know I shall never want for a warm friend while you live, doctor."

"Quite right. I shall ever guard your interests," he assured her.

"Father selected you his executor, did he not? I thought I heard him say so at one time."

"Y-y-yes—that is—I believe—yes, he did."

"I am glad of that," Pauline continued, "for I know he made a good choice. But, Doctor Brandt, now that I remember, what was there between you and my father that led to the trouble?"

"Didn't he tell you?" he interrupted, quickly.

"No. Will you tell me?"

The physician breathed freer. Had she known what caused the difficulty with Calvert Herndon, he thought, she might also be aware of Herndon's destroying the will in which he, Gulick Brandt, was appointed executor.

"Nothing, my dear; nothing much," was his answer. "Your father misunderstood

something concerning me—and you know his hasty temper? He would not allow me to explain. He forgot himself, much to my regret, and struck me. I had to strike him in self-defense—there, there, I am wounding you. I should have been more careful."

"No, no," she said, and a fresh burst of tears, "you do not wound me. I am glad to hear it explained in some way, even though it cuts me. I know you was always hasty."

"Mr. Victor Hassan desires to see Miss Pauline," here announced a servant.

"Admit him—admit him at once!" she cried, for the sound of her lover's name was joyful to her ear.

Victor Hassan entered the parlor, and having bowed courteously to Doctor Brandt, he totally ignored that gentleman's presence, clasping Pauline to him with affectionate tenderness.

"Pauline," he asked, "what means this dread silence about the house? Why is every thing so hushed? I saw a carpenter upon the door."

"Death," was the one whispered, tremulous word of answer that interrupted him.

"Who, Pauline?"

"My father, Victor. Oh! he's dead—he's dead!" and she completely broke down, pillowing her head upon his breast.

The young man was staggered at this intelligence, and glanced at the physician inquiringly.

"Mr. Herndon died last night of heart disease. It was not known till this morning, when the servants found him in his library," explained Brandt.

"This is sudden and terrible!" exclaimed Victor; then to Pauline: "Don't cry so, darling. Let me soothe you if I can. Come, sit down."

Doctor Brandt excused himself, and left them. Just outside the door he encountered Hallison Blair, whose face wore an expression of anger, while he hissed:

"What did you come out for? They'll bill and coo like doves; while I, who love her more than life, must be quiet witness of their devotion to one another!"

"A proper sense of delicacy prompted me to withdraw, Mr. Blair. If you choose to eavesdrop, and then cry against what you see and hear—I can not help it," and with this, the Englishman was alone.

When Victor and his betrothed seated themselves, the former said: "This is sorrowful indeed, dearest; but strive to check your grief. It is all for the best. Providence works nothing but what is just."

"Oh, Victor!" and she could speak no further.

"I could not come yesterday afternoon, as I promised," he continued. "My employer had some important private business to look after, which no one but myself could thoroughly understand. But for this I would have hastened to you. Little did I anticipate what news would greet me when I did come."

"I knew it must be something of that kind which detained you, dear Victor."

And then their conversation fell into other channels.

From the lover came words of tender consolation to the bereaved one; sentences were poured into her ear soothing as oil on troubled waters. None other than a lover could speak the condolence, whisper the solace, which brought a balm in their very sound; and as she listened, she felt her weight of woe lightened by the sincere and adequate sympathy tuned in the soft strain of pure affection.

When the moment at last arrived for Victor to depart, he arose, saying:

"Our marriage, darling, must necessarily be postponed."

"Yes, Victor," she assented.

"I can wait," continued he, seeming loth to leave her, "until the proper time. It will not be so hard to delay our happiness, considering it is by Heaven's decree. And, besides, I know our love will live as true, unvarying till I can claim you for my own."

"I am yours now, Victor. But in this delay I shall think of you constantly. We will not have to wait so very long."

"Good-by, then, Pauline," and with a last parting embrace, he was gone.

He did not notice the shadow which crouched close in a convenient niche as he passed out; and when the door closed after him, Hallison Blair muttered between his clenched teeth: "Ay, Victor Hassan, but the delay will be for long—your will have to wait longer than you imagine to claim Pauline Herndon for a wife. She is mine. No power on earth shall keep her from me!"

The Englishman then entered the parlor. Pauline stood where Victor had left her. Her head drooped forward, and in her fancied solitude she sobbed violently, burying her face in her tear-wet handkerchief.

But the coming step aroused her as it drew near. She looked up; the pallor of her features deepened as she saw who was with her, for beneath the garb of disinterested sympathy lurked a dread something which shone in Blair's eyes like the light of a serpent gaze.

"I come to condole with you," he said, advancing close to her.

"Oh! Mr. Blair, please leave me. Let me be alone."

"He pursued, 'you will not deprive me of the privilege to offer sympathy in this sore trial which is brought upon you?'"

"I would much rather be alone. I am afraid of you, Mr. Blair—not as one strong man fears another who is stronger, but because my heart trembles when I am in your company."

He bit his lip, but said: "Be seated. I have something to say to you."

"Oh! do not importune me with your love! Have some consideration!" she cried, pleadingly, while the tears so mazed her vision that she could scarce see him to whom she spoke.

"Nay, you are worrying yourself unnecessarily," he interrupted, in a manner which deceived her into believing his expression sincere. "Come, be seated, and hear what I have to say."

She obeyed his request, and for the time checking her weeping, became attentive to his speech.

"I have something to communicate," (and as he spoke his glance bent fixedly upon her) "which surprises me in realizing it, while I judge, it will prove painful to you. I know you do not love me, yet, in carrying out the wishes of your dead father, you can certainly bring yourself to tolerate me."

"I do not understand you, sir."

"What I wish to say, is this: your father was evidently prevailed upon by more mature thought, to alter his intentions toward Mr. Victor Hassan. Though he told you to choose your own husband, it seems he changed his mind, and concluded to make the choice himself."

Pauline gazed at him in bewildered silence.

"I happened to enter the library, just now, and on the large desk, at which your father was in the habit of sitting, I saw an envelope directed to myself, and containing this note. Read it."

As he concluded, he handed her a note, which she perceived to be in Calvert Herndon's handwriting, and which ran as follows:

"LORD HALLISON BLAIR:—There is no telling when one may be recalled from this world to the next. In view of this, a sense of duty indicates a course of action, which as is fitting her station in life. My consent, it is true, was given to a marriage between my child and Victor Hassan; but, it was done without that full thought and careful consideration I, as a parent, should have exercised. I have weighed the matter well, and deem it expedient that you take Pauline to yourself—ay, particularly request, knowing your affection for her, that you do so. She can forget the hasty engagement with one not able to care for her as she has been reared. In marrying you she will be elevated to that position to which she is entitled. Take her; be kind to her; and in that event, all I possess shall revert to her when of age. She will not refuse your proposal of marriage when she knows this to be my express desire. I hope of a father whose solicitude is unbounded, and every thought tended to her future welfare. I write this while filled with presentiment of coming evil."

"Your True Friend, CALVERT HERNDON."

The epistle fell from her nerveless hand, and, with an agonizing moan, she sunk back in a swoon.

She lay, her white face upturned, still, marble-like, seemingly bereft of animation; while the villain, who had at first glowered, unseem, over the fair head as she bowed in perusal of the letter, now felt uneasy, unable to decide upon a course of action.

It was only for a moment. Then he sprang toward the bell-cord, and pulled it violently.

"Help! assistance here!" he cried. "Come, some one—help!"

Alarmed at the fierce clang of the bell, and the loud calls, several servants came rushing pell-mell to the parlor. Explaining Pauline's state to one of the maids, he abruptly dismissed the others, picked up the letter that lay on the floor, and retired to an alcove, where his victim might not see him when she recovered consciousness.

Under the persistent efforts of the terrified, wondering waiting-maid, Pauline slowly returned to that life of which she had been suddenly and momentarily robbed.

Gradually she recalled what had happened. She glanced about her to see if Blair, her persecutor, was still in the room.

"Are you ill?—what is the matter?—what can I do?" asked the girl, in anxious tone.

"No; it is nothing, Kate," answered Pauline, evasively, and arising from the sofa. "I am faint, and weak—nothing more. I will go to my room."

With the maid's assistance, she tottered, rather than walked, from the parlor, and the Englishman, as he watched her retreating form, muttered:

"That will fix it. This letter is all-powerful, as I judged it would be. She will not go contrary to the wishes of her father; I know her nature too well to anticipate any further difficulty. She is mine! mine! mine!" and he strode from the alcove, out into the hall, and up stairs to his private apartments.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 59.)

The Winged Whale: OR, THE MYSTERY OF RED RUPERT.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN,
AUTHOR OF "SCARLET HAND," "HEART OF FIRE,"
"WOLF DEMON," ETC.

CHAPTER X. THE CHALLENGE.

THE morning that succeeded the night on which the events related in the preceding chapters took place, broke bright and beautiful.

About ten o'clock the American, Andrews, proceeded to the quarters occupied by the Spanish officers who commanded the soldiers that garrisoned Pensacola.

He had very little trouble in finding the rooms occupied by Captain Estevan.

The Spaniard seemed annoyed when his visitor was shown into his quarters.

"Captain Estevan, I believe," said Andrews, bowing politely.

"The same, sir, at your service," Estevan replied.

"My name is Andrews—Decius Andrews. I come to you on behalf of my friend, Rupert Vane. I suppose you understand the nature of my visit?"

"I presume you bear a hostile message?"

"Exactly," Andrews said, with another bow.

"I have not the pleasure of being acquainted with the person you represent; that is, I have never been formally introduced to him," Estevan said, sneeringly.

"It don't make the least bit of difference," Andrews replied, quietly; "he'd just as lief fight you as his bosom friend, and perhaps a little fiercer."

"But, I am not quite sure that the person that you represent—"

"Excuse me," interrupted Andrews, "you've said 'person' twice. I think that you are laboring under a mistake. I represent a gentleman named Rupert Vane."

Estevan bit his lip. The coolness of the American annoyed him.

"The term makes very little difference," he said, haughtily.

"Oh! beg your pardon, it makes a great deal of difference to me if it don't to you," Andrews remarked, coolly. "Now, when I call you a gentleman, you can't object to the title, even if, in your own mind, you know that you are not."

"Senior, do you mean to insult me?" cried Estevan, in rage.

"Insult! not a bit of it—that is, not at present. I'm here on another man's quarrel; after you get through with him, if you want to take a hack at me, I don't mind accommodating you from ten-pounders down to pop-guns; I like to be agreeable," Andrews said, with a beaming smile upon his thin features.

"Enough of this folly! To business, sir!" cried the Spaniard, abruptly.

"Jes' so. Then, on behalf of my friend, Mr. Rupert Vane, I demand the satisfaction due from one gentleman to another."

"I am an officer in the Spanish service. I can not condescend to measure weapons with an unknown blackguard," Estevan said, in contempt.

Andrews looked at the Spaniard for a moment, and the look upon his features told that he was debating some difficult problem in his mind.

"Well, I don't know," he said, at length. "I haven't had much experience in these affairs of honor, as they call 'em, and I don't know how far my duties as a second ought to extend. I've a doubt on the subject. If you called my principal a blackguard to his face, he would have pitched you out of that window, and I ain't sure but what I ought to do it as his second; but, as I said, I ain't quite posted, and the pint bothers me. I'll let it pass this time; but be careful, for the next delicate expression that you use like that, I'll pitch you through that window if it takes me right out of my boots."

One glance at the brawny figure of the stalwart Yankee, and the Spaniard felt convinced that he could keep his word if inclined so to do.

"But, as I said afore, I'm a second, not a first. I ain't come to fight but to arrange a fight. Now, if you have any doubts about my friend, Mr. Vane, being worthy to meet you, he'll quickly remove 'em."

"Indeed, how?" asked Estevan, scornfully.

"He'll take a good-sized whip and gi'n you the darndest flogging you ever did have, the first time he meets you in the street," replied Andrews, coolly.

"What?" yelled the Spaniard, in rage, and the big veins on his forehead swelled out like whip-cords; "he would not dare!"

"Oh, now?" he? Well, you jes' try him, that's all."

"Enough; I accept the challenge."

"Well, I had an idea you would," Andrews remarked, placidly.

"As the challenged party, I have the choice of time, place and weapons."

"Exactly."

"To-day is Thursday."

"Jes' so."

"I'll meet your principal next Monday; the weapons, swords; the time we will fix hereafter. If you will give me your address, my second will call upon you and make all the necessary arrangements."

"Next Monday! that's some ways off," Andrews remarked.

"I have the right to fix the day, sir, and I shall not waive my right," Estevan said, haughtily.

"Who in thunder wants you to?" exclaimed Andrews. "I only remarked that it was some ways off. From Thursday to Monday—why, there's time enough to kill half a dozen men, let alone one, in that space."

"What do you mean, sir?" demanded Estevan, with a frowning face.</

stood by the window, and there they sat, she, twining her soft white arms around him as if she feared that some evil fortune might tear him suddenly from her side.

"And you have come from Orleans expressly to see me?" he asked.

"Yes," she replied, a look of surprise appearing on her face. "What other reason could bring me to Pensacola? Estevan, I can not live away from you. Your face is to me what the sun is to the earth; banish it and all is gloom. I can not live away from you."

"Suppose that I should die?"

"I should not long survive you," she said, mournfully.

"Nanon, I feel that I do not love you as you deserve to be loved," he said, regretfully.

"But you may, in time," she cried, quickly.

"Nanon, there is great peril before me."

"Peril?"

"Yes, on Monday next I am to meet a foe in a duel. It will end only in the death of one or both of us," he said, gravely.

"Who is your foe?" Nanon asked, with a pale face.

"An American called Rupert Vane. His second, one Andrews, bore me his challenge to-day. I accepted it for Monday, and named swords as the weapons. I shall select some officer of the garrison as a second, and send him on Saturday to arrange the place and time of meeting."

"Who is this Rupert Vane, and why does he seek your life?"

"He is an American, the guest of Senor Garcia, the merchant. Who or what he is, or what brings him to Pensacola, I can not guess. From his appearance I should judge that at some former time he has followed the sea."

"But the cause of the quarrel?" she asked.

"He believed that by means of a hired bravo I attempted his life last night."

"Why should you wish his life?"

"Ay, why, indeed?" said Estevan, with assumed earnestness; "tis an idea of his. Some of these Americans are terribly hot-headed, despite their cold natures."

"But you will conquer him!" she cried.

"I'll try to!" he replied.

"You must not die, but live for love and me."

"What power on earth like a true woman's love?"

CHAPTER XI.

THE MEETING IN THE FOREST.

In a little glade in the forest, sheltered from the hot beams of the sun, the young sailor, Rupert Vane, waited.

Twenty paces to the right, the rays of the day-god glided down through the leafy treecrotops upon the black waters of the bayou.

Eagerly, the young sailor looked through the dim aisles of the forest that led to Pensacola.

"Can any thing have happened to detain her?" he murmured, an accent of impatience in his voice. "Can this Spanish rival of mine have learned by any means, that she was to meet me this afternoon? It is hardly possible. I am in a fever of impatience. Minutes seem like hours."

Nervously, Rupert paced up and down the forest glade.

As he waited, chafing at the delay, there came to his watchful ear, the sound of a light step hastening toward him. His face brightened up.

"It is she!" he murmured.

The guess of the sailor was right, for, with a step as light and elastic as the bounding fawn, Isabel came through the wood.

A glad smile lit up her face as she beheld the manly form of her lover.

In another moment she was in his arms.

"Pardon me if I have kept you waiting," she said. "I fear that I have been followed."

"Followed!" exclaimed Rupert, and an angry fire lighted up his dark eyes.

"Yes, as I came from the house, I noticed that one of the soldiers of the garrison was loitering about the door. I thought not of it at the moment as being anything unusual; but, as I left the city, I chanced to glance back. You can judge of my alarm when I saw that the soldier was walking along, slowly, behind me. For a moment I halted. The soldier perceived that I had noticed him, and, with a careless air, he turned into a little wine-shop that was close by. I hastened on, ever and anon keeping a watchful look behind me."

"And did you see him again?"

"No, yet shortly after I entered the forest I fancied that a dark form was dogging my footsteps. I hastened onward, hoping by flight to baffle the pursuit."

"It would not be well for this fellow if I caught him," said Rupert, sternly.

"But who can have put a spy upon your footsteps?"

"The man that would rival you in my love."

"You mean the son of the commandante, captain, Estevan?"

"Yes."

"Does he think to win your love by making himself hateful to you?" Rupert asked.

"I am rich—an heiress. That is the reason why he seeks my hand. From the servants I have heard many strange tales of his wild and lawless acts. I have learned to loathe his very presence," Isabel replied, with a shudder.

"I bear ill will to none in the world," Rupert said, slowly; "but, Isabel, I will not yield you to mortal man, even though he were one of the princes of the earth. In the sight of Heaven you are my plighted wife. Soon I shall claim the fulfillment of your vow."

"I am yours whenever you claim me," the girl replied, simply.

"Our happiness will not be long delayed. One short week and I trust that I shall be able to call you mine forever and forever," the lover said, fondly.

"And till that time guard well your life!" exclaimed Isabel, earnestly.

"What danger threatens me?"

"Estevan!"

"And do you think that there is danger to be apprehended from him?"

"Yes; not openly, for his nature is an evil one, I am sure. He will strike you in the dark and secretly."

"I have very little fear," Rupert said, quietly.

"But, for my sake, be careful," the maiden pleaded, looking, with eyes beaming tenderly with love into the dark face of the sailor.

"For thy sake I'll guard my life as though it were a precious jewel. Hitherto I have dared death undauntedly, but, in the future, I will be as careful as though my existence

was a fragile glass that might be shattered by a touch."

With a long, sweet kiss, Isabel repaid the promise.

"And now we must arrange some method by which we can communicate with each other," Rupert said.

"I have thought of a plan!" Isabel exclaimed, quickly. "I have a black, named Geno, whom I am sure that I can trust. He can reach you unobserved. No one will suspect that he is our confidant."

"The plan is an excellent one. I am stopping at the house of Senor Garcia, the merchant."

"Yes; I know it well," Isabel said.

"There your messenger can find me."

"And now I must return. I may not stay too long away, else my absence will be noticed and suspicions aroused. Do you love me as well as ever?" and Isabel looked, smilingly, into Rupert's face.

"Can you doubt it?" he exclaimed, passionately. "Ah! Isabel, you are dearer to me than even life itself. Your love creates for me a heaven on earth. Should I lose you, all would be gloom and despair."

"You do love me!" Isabel said, in a tone of conviction.

"You believe that I do?"

"Yes, and I like to hear you say it," she replied, frankly.

"Oh! I shall count the hours until you are mine."

"And I the minutes!"

"You will send to me soon?"

"Yes, and steal forth to meet you if I can."

"When?" asked Rupert, eagerly.

"Perhaps to-night," Isabel replied, after thinking for a moment. "You know the broad plaza that looks toward the sea?"

"Yes."

"After vesper I will try to avoid observation and meet you there; till then, farewell."

"Shall I not accompany you through the forest?" he asked.

"It is better that you should not. This soldier, who I think is watching me, may be concealed somewhere in the bushes. If he should see us together, my object in walking this way would be easily guessed. But, if you are not seen with me, no one can tell but what I have sought the forest for the amusement of the walk."

"You will think of me sometimes in the long hours that must intervene ere we meet again?" Rupert pleaded.

"Think of you!" cried Isabel, softly, clinging to the manly bosom of her lover. "Oh, Rupert, you are ever in my thoughts, and have been for many a year. Yes, ever since you saved my life on this very spot. See, yonder is the tree to the limb of which the panther clung. It is years since that terrible scene, yet when close my eyes even now, it all returns with startling earnestness. Why should I not give myself to you? You saved my life; it is yours, then, by right."

"And I shall claim it!"

Again Rupert drew the light form of the blushing maid to his heart, touched the full, red lips so rich in their precious sweetness, and then, with a heart full of joy, and a smile upon her lovely face, that made her look more like an angel than ever, Isabel hastened away.

Rupert watched her until she was lost to sight amid the tree-trunks.

"What would not a man dare to win the love of such a jewel of a girl!" he exclaimed, his eyes kindling with passion.

Then a rustling in the bushes attracted the attention of the young sailor.

Suspicious of another ambushade flashed through his mind. With a motion quick as thought, he thrust his hand into his bosom and grasped the loaded pistol that he carried there.

From the covert of the bushes, from whence the noise had proceeded, rose the tall figure of an Indian chief. He was an aged warrior, stern and grim-visaged.

He extended his hand toward the young man, for his keen eye had noted the warlike preparation.

"Me friend," he said, laconically.

Rupert removed his hand from the butt of the pistol. He saw nothing hostile in the face of the savage.

"Red-face—pale chief?" said the Indian, in a tone of question.

"Yes, I am a pale chief," Rupert replied.

"My brother lives yonder?" and the savage pointed to Pensacola.

"No, I am a stranger here," and then a sudden thought occurred to him. "Is the red chief an Apalachee warrior?"

Gravely the savage shook his head.

"What tribe is my brother?"

"The Natchez live by the big river that rolls ever onward to the great salt lake. One wigwag in the village of the red braves is empty. The chiefs of the Natchez wait for the return of a warrior who has journeyed to where the great ball of fire comes out of the earth. The snake-with-three-tails is a great chief. Scalps hang thick in his wigwag."

Rupert gathered from the speech of the Indian that he was a chief of the Natchez tribe and called "The-snake-with-three-tails."

"Why does the red chief hide in the bushes and watch?" Rupert asked.

"The eyes of the chief are old—dim with the weight of many spears—yet when he looks upon the face of his white brother, whose skin has been kissed by the great sun, he sees that the blood of the Indian runs in his veins," said the warrior, with a stolid face.

Rupert started in astonishment. He guessed that, like a specter from the tomb, the aged chief had risen, uncalled, to reveal to him the secret of his birth.

"Chief, I know not whether I am white or red, or a mixture of both. My birth and parentage are both mysteries to me. Even now I seek among the warriors of the Apalachee nation some aged chief to penetrate if I can the secret of my early life."

"The Apalachee nation?" questioned the Indian.

"Yes; something tells me that they can reveal to me all that I wish to know. I am sure that the blood of the Indian is in my veins. From early boyhood all have called me Red Rupert."

"Face red," said the chief, as if in explanation.

"Yes; that is the reason."

"Many moons ago a singing-bird dwelt in the lodges of the Apalachees; Lupah was the flower of her tribe," said the Indian, slowly.

"Lupah," murmured Rupert, with a thoughtful air; and he passed his hand with a vacant look across his forehead, as though old memories had been aroused by the name. "Lupah," he murmured again.

"Strange how familiar that name is to me,

and yet I do not remember to have ever heard it before."

"The singing-bird sung in the lodge of a chief. She bore him a son. The chief had a bad heart; it was rotten like the hollow oak in which the bear makes his wigwag. He left the singing-bird and sought a home afar. She died, and the wild-flowers grow over her grave, none as fair as the flower that sleeps beneath the earth."

A vague suspicion passed through the mind of Rupert. Earnestly he gazed upon the features of the aged chief, and strove to bring back to his mind the scenes of early years. The effort was useless; memory was a blank.

"Chief, know you aught of my birth?" Rupert asked, anxiously.

"When the time comes, the chief of the Natchez will speak," replied the savage, ambiguously. "Let the eyes of the white-skin, who has the face of the Indian, be sharp as the eyes of the hawk. Snakes are in his path. The white squaw was followed from the big lodges by a snake who hid in the bushes. Good-by." And, as suddenly as he had come, the chief disappeared in the thicket. Rupert remained transfixed with amazement.

CHAPTER XII.

THE SECOND OF DON ESTEVAN.

Rupert gazed after the chief in wonder. "Yon savage holds the clue to unravel the mystery that surrounds me," he murmured. "I am sure of it. When the time comes, he will speak; but when will the time come?"

The sigh of the breeze rustling the leaves of the pines alone answered the question. Slowly the young sailor walked back toward the forest.

Arriving at the house of the merchant Garcia, whose guest the sailor was, he found Andrews at the door awaiting him.

"Hello, I've been on the look-out for you!" the Yankee exclaimed.

"Has any thing happened?" asked Rupert, who guessed from the manner of the other that he had something of importance to communicate.

"There's a visitor inside, waiting to see you."

"To see me?" questioned Rupert, in astonishment; for with the exception of Senor Garcia, he knew not a man in the city.

"Yes; he's been here nearly an hour. I told him that you were out, but he said that his business was particular; that he must see you, and he would wait."

"What is he like?" asked the sailor, who couldn't understand who his strange visitor could be, or guess on what errand he came.

"He's a young stripling about nineteen, I should judge."

"Perhaps he is the bearer of a message from this Spanish captain, Estevan," Rupert suggested.

"Well, I don't think that that is likely. He's nothing but a boy. The Spaniard would be likely to select one of his brother-officers to act as his second. Besides, the second of the captain will want to see me, and not you."

"Yes, that is very true," Rupert said, thoughtfully.

"I thought it might be possible that he brought some message from Miss Isabel," Andrews remarked, with a sly glance at Rupert's face.

"That is not possible, for I have just parted from Isabel. She met me by stealth not two hours ago in the forest," Rupert said, quietly.

"I can't guess, then, what in thunder the critter does want!" Andrews exclaimed, perplexed.

"I'll soon find out."

Conducted by Andrews, Rupert entered the house.

The stranger rose and bowed gracefully as the two came into the room wherein he was seated.

Rupert beheld a slender, boyish figure, attired like a gentleman, in a costly, well-fitting garb of black. The face of the youth was as fair as the face of a woman, and was lit up by a pair of dark, lustrous eyes.

The sailor saw at a glance that he looked upon the face of a stranger.

"You wish to see me, senor?" he asked.

"You are the Senor Rupert?" the stripling said, in a clear, musical voice.

"At your service, sir," Rupert replied, bowing.

"Allow me to introduce myself," said the youth. "I am called Ferdinand Capello. I have come on behalf of Captain Estevan Alvarado."

Rupert and Andrews exchanged a look of astonishment.

"Why didn't you say what your business was at the first?" asked Andrews, a trace of indignation in his tones. "I act as the friend of Senor Vane. It wasn't necessary that you should see him. I could have arranged every thing with you."

"Your pardon, senor!" exclaimed the youth, politely. "I thought it best that I should see the Senor Vane in person. What I have to say is very important, and is, probably, quite unexpected by both of you gentlemen."

Again Rupert and Andrews looked at each other in amazement.

The same thought occurred to both on the instant. The Spanish captain did not intend to fight.

"If your mission here is to seek to postpone, or to avoid this hostile meeting altogether, I can tell you at once, sir, that your mission will fail. Don Estevan either meets me, or I'll brand him as a coward before all men," said Rupert, sternly.

A glance of fire shot from the dark eyes of the youth. He raised his hand as if to stay the sailor in his speech.

"Your pardon, senor!" he cried, hastily, "you jump too quickly to conclusions. Not one drop of coward blood flows in the veins of Don Estevan Alvarado. My errand here is not to postpone but to hasten the meeting between yourself and my principal."

The two Americans were more astonished by this speech than even at the previous words of the young stranger.

"The sooner the meeting comes, the better I shall be pleased," responded Rupert, curtly.

"Will to-night suit the senor?"

"To-night!" exclaimed Andrews, in utter astonishment.

"Yes, to-night," repeated the youth.

"Well, this is 'tarnal sudden!" ejaculated Andrews.

From the words of Senor Rupert, I should judge that the change would be agreeable to him," said the youth, dryly.

"It is," replied Rupert, quickly; "as well to-night as at any other time."

"At what hour?" asked Andrews, into whose mind a dim suspicion had crept.

"At ten," said the stranger. "By that

hour the moon will be up and afford sufficient light for the encounter. Does the hour suit?"

"Perfectly," Rupert replied.

"And the place?" Andrews asked.

"A glade in the woods by the bayou. I can not very well describe the place, but I will come at half-past nine and conduct you to it."

"I must speak with Senor Rupert alone for a minute before you can receive your answer," Andrews said, quickly, as if with the intent of preventing Rupert from speaking.

"As you please, senor; I can wait," the youth said.

"Excuse us for a few moments," Andrews said.

The youth politely bowed assent.

Andrews and Rupert withdrew into an adjoining apartment.

The Yankee carefully closed the door behind him.

Rupert observed the cautious action of the other with a quiet smile.

"Well, what do you think of it?" asked Andrews.

"That this Spaniard is afraid that delay will cool his courage, and wishes to have the matter settled at once," Rupert replied.

"That's your idea, eh?"

"Yes."

"Well, it ain't mine," Andrews said, with a dubious shake of the head.

"What do you think?"

"I fear treachery," was Andrews' significant answer.

"From this Spanish captain?"

"Exactly! I've got the idea into my head that he doesn't dare to meet you in fair fight, and has laid another scheme to entrap you."

"But, how can that be possible?" asked Rupert, an angry frown gathering upon his dark face at the bare idea.

"Easy enough. This boy—for he isn't anything more—proposes that you meet the Spaniard in some spot in the forest at ten to-night. He doesn't name the exact place, but says that he will conduct you there. Now, this doesn't look right. Why does the Spaniard send this boy instead of one of his brother officers? Surely a fellow that is going to fight for his life would rather choose a man to act as his second than a stripling not yet out of his teens, like this boy."

"There is reason in what you say," Rupert observed, thoughtfully.

"Of course!" exclaimed Andrews, quickly. "This damned cuss has attempted your life once, why shouldn't he try it on again? The second time may succeed, even if the first failed."

"You think, then, that the plan is to waylay us as we proceed through the forest?"

"That's the ticket. The 'tarnal critter can put us out of the way quietly, and who will be the wiser for it?"

"How shall I avoid the snare—if it be a snare?"

"Don't go alone; take Senor Garcia and some of his friends with you," suggested Andrews.

"Your idea is a good one. I will follow your advice. I do not wish to give this cur of a captain the chance to say that I hesitated to meet him," Rupert said, a look of anger shining in his dark eyes.

"Course not! Sakes alive! that wouldn't do!" Andrews cried, quickly.

"The captain may object to the presence of my friends," suggested Rupert.

"Let him! Who cares?" exclaimed Andrews, defiantly. "If he objects, it's because he don't mean that you shall have fair play. Just you let me talk to this young man. I'll straighten things out, or my name ain't Decius Andrews."

"Old friend, I'll place myself entirely in your hands," Rupert said, taking the horny palm of the Yankee between his own.

"I'll bring him up with a round turn, see if I don't!"

The two then re-entered the apartment where sat the young stripling, who claimed to be the second of the Spanish captain.

The youth rose at their approach and waited silently, as if to hear the decision that the twain had arrived at.

"Return to your principal and tell him that the time and place suit. I suppose that there will be no objection to a few friends of ours witnessing the duel?" Andrews said, his keen eye fixed intently on the face of the youth as he spoke.

"Friends?" asked the stripling, inquiringly.

"Yes; for instance, Senor Garcia and—"

"I do not see that there can be any objection to the presence of your friends," interrupted the youth.

Andrews was astonished.

He had expected that there would be a decided objection to the presence of witnesses. The keen wits of the Yankee were at fault.

"No objection?" he stammered.

"None in the world that I can think of," replied the youth, politely.

Andrews looked at Rupert, dumbfounded. His guess wrong, he had nothing more to say.

"It is understood, then?" continued the youth.

"At ten to-night," Rupert cried.

"Exactly. I will come for the senor at half-past nine. The weapons, swords; we will provide them. Until then, I bid you adieu."

With a polite bow, the youth departed.

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It is such stories as this low announced which have given the SATURDAY JOURNAL its pre-eminence as the

BEST OF ALL THE WEEKLIES,
and by which its ascendancy is to be maintained. As announced elsewhere, it is one of the series of Literary Novels for our spring and summer campaign, and will immensely please our vast circle of readers.

Foolscap Papers.

Washday.

You are first awakened to a consciousness of its being blue-Monday and washday by your wife pulling the pillows out from under your head, at four o'clock in the morning, to get the pillow-slips for the wash.

It's no use to try to go back to sleep and take up your dream where it was broken off, for the whole down-stairs is in a perfect uproar, and all the doors seem to be on the slam.

You rise in the dark and hunt all around for your socks, which are down-stairs in the tub, the same as your shirt.

Every thing and everybody seem to have been waked up too early, and to have got cross, your wife unusually so, the baby more so.

The all-pervading essence of suds greets you in every room, while, ever and anon, you stumble over a pile of clothes which some nook or corner has disgorged, and wonder at the magnitude of the stock, especially since more new things are constantly being got.

Your wife, as soon as she gets done spanking one of the young-ones, for sitting down in the soft-soap, and a smaller one, for sucking the indigo-bag, tells you to hurry out and get wood, so you can commence to carry rain-water from your neighbor's cistern over the way, the pump in yours being broken.

When you get the water all carried, you find there is another tubful wanted, and the neighbor's bull-dog is remarkably cross this morning, from being waked so early—you know he never stops barking or went to sleep till two o'clock by the watch.

You find the washwoman, who has brought her whole family along for company and to fight and spit at your children, bosses you if possible with more right than your wife does.

There is so much incidental confusion that you couldn't hear your own ears if they went to whistling a clothes-line reel, so you slip out of the house and go and sit by yourself in the wood-shed, reflecting on the blessedness of the native African, who, with nothing to wear, has less to wash, until your wife calls you in to explain something about a letter in the female gender which she found in your pocket while hunting for handkerchiefs. After explaining it in a number of different ways, none of which seems to satisfy her mind, (she won't even believe that somebody tried to play a joke on you by slipping it into your pocket, nor that it is from your cousin), you find that the harmony is not likely to become restored, and so you give up in despair, and are ordered out to hang up the clothes-line and yourself, if you know what's good for you.

Then you get the line hopelessly tangled up, and also in the mud—we had a shower last night, and, after working hard, and swearing with if possible, still more solidity, you finally get the line stretched, but with more knots in it than a steamship can run in twenty days with a fair wind, each one of which gives way easily enough as soon as the first basketful of clothes straddles the line, letting all down in the mud. Then your domestic harmony is worse on the wane than ever, and you begin to think you are almost as mean a man as your wife, assisted by the washwoman, makes you out to be, and you are made aware that there is a secret sympathy existing between them that smacks of no sympathy for you.

Then you become more miserably turned upside down by your two youngest children falling into the suds, whom you have to run through the clothes-wringer and put in the oven to dry.

When you upset the boiler of hot water down your leg as you go to lift it off, you are suddenly made aware that you are yourself in spite of all that your wife says or what you had nearly begun to believe.

You don't feel any better either when, in getting ready to go to the butcher's and get a quarter of beef for breakfast, you find that the white vest you wore on Sunday is in the wash with the last roll of one-dollar bills you had in one of the pockets, and that the woman washed the vest harder than any other thing in the wash.

Your wife loses the balance of her humor when she discovers that the children have eaten all the starch up, and that the balance of them are out throwing mud-balls at the linen on the line, making sure shots. She encourages them by clapping her hands with unusual vehemence on their backs, as each in turn goes through the practice of swimming gymnastics, lying across her knee.

After you take that last load of wood you throw down by the stove off the household cat, and pick up the washwoman's child you last knocked over, you are told that, after you bring a tubful of water, for the bluing, you won't have to bring any more, except two other tubs full for the rinsing.

You find all the gold studs you left in your shirt but two in the bottom of the tub.

Breakfast comes on after you have been hungry so long that you have got over it, and the meat is burned to board, the coffee weak, the butter not, the toast, having been left to tend to itself, furnishing an illustration of Sodom and Gomorrah, and a taste of soap-suds in all, while you look around and thank your stars that Monday only comes once a week, but suddenly lapse into gloom again, reflecting that another will come the first of next week, and you go off down town and are seen suspiciously conversing with an undertaker.

Your wash-board,
WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

STICK TO IT.

How few in this world realize the weight of the three little words, "stick to it." How many have failed in the race of life because they grew faint-hearted, tired of the struggle, and gave up the contest, even at the very moment when sticking to it would have placed victory within their grasp.

It is related that Robert Bruce, the Scottish hero, after a desperate fight with his English foes, which had resulted in the utter defeat and rout of his forces, flying for his life, found refuge in a miserable hovel. There, yielding to despair, he was meditating a flight to some foreign country, half resolved to give up his hopes of gaining the throne of Scotland and freeing his country from the English yoke. A spider, essaying to spin his web upon the wall, caught the eye of the warrior. Six times the spider tried and failed, but on the seventh he succeeded. Bruce took courage. A man, he thought, should not have less patience than an insect. Bruce once again raised his standard, and Bannockburn beheld the overwhelming defeat of his foes.

The lesson of the spider gave the Scot a kindly crown.

And so, in our modern day, sticking to it, has given men fame and fortune.

Like Davy Crockett, be sure that you're right, then go ahead, and stick to it. Grant attacked Vicksburg, first on one side, then on another; repulse followed repulse, but he believed in sticking to it, and the result was, that Vicksburg at last surrendered to his arms.

The same dogged determination carried the Union General into Richmond.

The old shoemaker used to say: "There's nothing like leather," so we say, there's nothing like sticking to it.

If a man strikes his fist against a rock, he undoubtedly will bruise his knuckles; let him strike against a mass of water, the water parts and the flesh will be uninjured; yet that same mass of water, falling drop by drop upon the rock, in time will make a most decided impression upon it. The result is attained by sticking to it.

Forty years ago, what was more unlikely than that Louis Napoleon, the vagabond adventurer, should ever mount the throne of France—should ever reign over the country which laughed at him as a madman? If a man strikes his fist against a rock, he undoubtedly will bruise his knuckles; let him strike against a mass of water, the water parts and the flesh will be uninjured; yet that same mass of water, falling drop by drop upon the rock, in time will make a most decided impression upon it. The result is attained by sticking to it.

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Nothing like "sticking to it."

A "BULLETIN."

It is impossible for us to notice the multitude of notices of the SATURDAY JOURNAL which greet us in the press and in correspondence; but, occasionally, we must say "Thank you, sir!" to show that we are grateful and gratified at the reception which meets us in every quarter. We owe the following to the Baltimore Evening Bulletin of April 11th:

BALTIMORE ROMANIST—A. P. MORRIS, JR.

This talented author, whose effusions have frequently delighted the reading community and who resides among us, is now engaged in writing for that model of family weeklies, *The New York Star* Journal, to all who take pleasure in following a well-stored and well-trained mind through the labyrinth of beautiful creations, we with pleasure and confidence recommend the perusal of our gifted townsman's production in *The New York Star Journal*, which as a paper for family reading and choice matter, is unequalled by any in all particulars, and is especially noteworthy for beauty of its type, making the reading of its columns truly a pleasure. As a paper of the day it stands in the front rank of our weekly literature. Mr. Morris' new story about to appear is entitled "Hordewinkel," etc., etc. We predict for Mr. Morris in the literary world the same enviable reputation and success which his relatives have so long enjoyed in the mercantile community in which they reside.

THAT'S HOW!

In order to make your home a happy one, you must infuse the spirit of cheerfulness into it, and not let your black looks act like a pall over it. Don't be always finding fault, or craving after things unattainable. If you can't have velvet sofas, be content to sit up with a hair-cloth lounge. But don't snap and snarl because you are not so comfortably situated as your more fortunate neighbors. Now, men, if you don't wish to make your wives despairing ones, don't be praising up some other person's wife as a model for your own to follow. She may say nothing to you, but it will act like gall upon her. To make a home happy, be cheerful and kind yourselves, that's how. If you do not desire to have evil said against you, you mustn't put yourself in a situation to have it said. You may do a little action, which is, no doubt, as innocent as you think it to be, but there are plenty of beings only too willing and ready to comment upon it, and, my dear, they'll keep the ball rolling until you find the mixture of the mud with the snow has not added to its whiteness.

And now for the cause of this talking. It's nothing more than envy or jealousy, both of which are decidedly mean. Miss Smith has a new bonnet, and Miss Jones has not; then Miss Jones will talk of Miss Smith's extravagance. Mrs. Brown keeps a public boarding-house, and of course desires every one to board with her. If a person happens to wish to be retired, and goes to live with Mrs. Black, up goes Mrs. Brown's nose, and she hints and insinuates that some people must be mean or of rather doubtful character if they board at a private house. "Mercy me! if I were a widow like Mrs. Black, I'd never hear the last of it!"—and—that's how!

If you are not blessed with an Apollo-like form, and haven't the beauty of a Venus de Medicis, don't try to make up for it with abominable false substitutes, such as paints and paddings, but make up for it by being good and noble. A person with a benevolent heart is rarely a homely one. Our Heavenly Father looks at the heart and not at the face. But goodness of heart often makes the face handsome. If we are not handsome in body, let us be noble in soul, and that's how!

We are very apt to take up a paper and read accounts of our shivering brethren, and feel a thrill of horror at the recital of what the poor are obliged to undergo. Well, if the beggar's hat is raised to our window, do we put a coin into it? No! We drag our chairs nearer to the fire, and close our eyes as though we did not see it.

"Alas! for the rarity
Of Christian charity."

But, that's how! EVE LAWLESS.

COURAGE AND BRAVERY.

A PERSON can scarcely take up a paper at the present time without noticing that some person has performed a daring act. As, for instance, a man will ascend to the top of a tall steeple, of a windy day, just to let people see how foolhardy he is. Another will drive as near as he possibly can to the edge of a precipice without going over it, while yet another will see how near he can stand to a snorting locomotive, and not have a hair of his head singed.

Daring is not wanting in their composition. I allow. But, what good does it do any one to see or take part in such exhibitions? It surely can not be called courage. If they were to ascend the steeple to save some person, who had wandered up to the top of it, but whose dizzy brain prevented his making the descent, I would style that courage. If a man endangers his own life to save another whom he saw upon the railroad track, I would call that courage, also.

But, I will tell you where there is true courage. Look at the hundreds of poor girls in our large cities, hard-worked and miserably paid. Notice them, as they return from their work, when their more fortunate sisters are wending their way to some place of amusement. Is it a wonder if they do not wish they had as pleasant lives? When beauty is wedded to poverty, and the excitements, carnivals and rare costumes, flit before her eyes, and the tempter shows her that all these will be hers, if she will but become his, (he will not make her his wife), is there not courage required to answer, "Never!" It is well enough to preach about temptations being easy to resist, but were you thus tempted and tried, would there be no struggle in your bosom? Luxury for poverty, and feasting for fastings!

When such a time came, all the bitter anguish of the future would be banished in the supposed happiness of the present. Thank God, we have Spartan women among us, who have the courage to resist the tongue of the tempter, even be he masked under the guise of what is called "respectable" and "fashionable."

Do not despise the virtuous poor. Rather condemn those who oppress them and would lead them astray. Have courage to say a word in their behalf. Should the few lines I have written meet the eye of the young, let them be warned against the gilded life around them and envy it not; but be brave, and, with a pure heart for an inheritance, you are richer far than the poor sister who, though living in luxury, is yet a tainted, humiliated thing.

F. S. F.

THE STORY OF BLUE BEARD.

BY THE "FAT CONTRIBUTOR."

A LONG time ago, before the invention of hair-dye, when a man had to wear his beard the color that nature made it, there was a man who had made himself enormously rich as a whisky inspector, or something of that sort. I don't know precisely where he lived, but think he lived mostly in the imagination.

He ran a great castle, on the European plan; had horses and run them, and in fact run about every thing in his neighborhood, including running for office and with the girls—for, at the time of which I write, he was a gay widower. He had great quantities of greenbacks, corner lots, oil stock,

bonds, and things, but he was hideously ugly, and had, withal, an enormous BLUE BEARD, frightful to contemplate, which gave to him his cognomen, by which he was known to the country roundabout, as well as to the country that had laid off its roundabout, and consequently was in its shirt-sleeves.

Blue Beard grew weary of living in solitary magnificence in his lordly castle, and finding that he was getting bluer and bluer every day, he determined to marry. Having been married half a dozen times—taken half a dozen raw, as one might say—he was naturally quite miserable when deprived of the gentle influences of the sex for any length of time.

One of his neighbors, a widow lady, had two very beautiful and highly-accomplished daughters. They could play the piano, harp, and seven-up, and work embroidery and Planchette elegantly.

To this widow Blue Beard applied for the hand and general anatomy of one of her daughters, leaving her to decide which one she would give him. Although the "stamps" he had pleaded loudly in his favor (as they do yet), yet that dreadful beard was against him, and neither of the young women desired to have it against her. Blue wasn't fashionable for beards; if it had been, it might have been different. One of them wept bitterly because it would be several hundred years yet before hair-dye would be discovered so that he could have his whiskers colored.

Another circumstance rendered them shy of him. He was having a wedding every once in a while at the castle, but no funerals! Wedding-cake had been ordered from the confectioners several times, but no undertaker had had a job there yet. No matter how many times a man is left a widower, if he correspondingly patronizes some respectable owner of a hearse; but repeated wedding, without funerals, is certainly a suspicious circumstance.

Blue Beard cunningly invited the family and their friends to the castle, where they passed a week so delightfully that the youngest daughter began to think blue was a pretty good color for whiskers, after all—particularly when their possessor could keep up such an establishment as that, where they had three meals a day, besides a lunch every morning from ten o'clock until eleven. She looked with contempt on a red-whiskered beau of hers she used to think "perfectly splendid," and actually asked him why he didn't "rub indigo into em!" The upshot of the business was, she consented to become Mrs. B. Beard, and the wedding was celebrated with great eclat.

At the expiration of the honeymoon, Blue Beard pretended to his wife that business of importance called him away to a distant city. He would be absent for several weeks, and in the mean time she could invite company, and enjoy herself as much as possible. He gave her a bunch of keys, enabling her at any time to open his safe, and feast her eyes upon the diamonds (he loaned money on "collateral," sometimes, greenbacks, seven-thirties, revenue stamps, and receipted gas bills deposited there—also giving access to the wine-cellar, store-room, picture gallery, billiard-room, ten-pin alley, corn-house, etc., etc. But one little key opened a room in the basement that she must not approach save upon her peril. She promised, and he took a sweet-car for the depot.

From the time that Mother Eve disregarded the injunction against a certain tree in Eden's orchard, and partook of a Rhode Island pippin, thereby introducing various things into the world never before dreamed of, curiosity has been an absorbing passion with the fair sex, and we need hardly inform the intelligent reader that her husband was scarcely out of sight before Mrs. B. had unlocked the door of the forbidden room.

But, what a spectacle met her affrighted gaze! There, suspended on hooks like so many gowns in a clothes-press, were the bodies of the murdered Mrs. Blue Beards, whose funerals had been indefinitely postponed, while the floor was cluttered with their blood! She would have swooned, but the phrase wasn't known at that time. Terribly agitated, she dropped the key on the floor, staining it with blood, which she was afterward unable to wash out, even with the aid of a patent-wringer.

Blue Beard returned unexpectedly, as everybody might have expected, and the blood upon the key told the story of his wife's disobedience, for blood, you know, "will tell." "Must I!" he cried, wringing his hands in anguish, "must I again become a widower, and so soon? After one short month of wedded bliss (drawing his scimitar and carefully feeling its edge) must this latest and dearest one be torn from my arms and I left alone—alone? Bo-ho-ho-o!"

"Not if I can help it," remarked Mrs. B. to herself.

"I never nursed a dear gazelle," Blue Beard blubbered, as he proceeded to whet his scythe on the stove hearth, to glad me with its soft black eyes, but when it came to know me well—"

"Now, Blue Beard, I don't want to die."

"Prepare!" yelled Blue Beard, enraged that she did not at once accept the situation.

"Since I must die," said she, "grant me a quarter of an hour in which to write a farewell letter to the press."

He could not refuse so reasonable a request, so he granted it, although he was not originally a Grant man. Going to her room she told her sister Anna to ascend to the top of the tower and see if her brothers (who, supposing Blue Beard was away, were coming to smoke his cigars and drink up his whisky) were yet in sight. There was a cloud of dust in the road, but it was only a flock of sheep on their way to the State Fair.

"Time's up!" shouted Blue Beard, who didn't think much of writing letters to newspapers, anyhow.

"Only one moment more. Anna, oh, Anna!" she softly cried, "do you see anybody coming now?"

"I see two horsemen. They see me wave my handkerchief. It is—it is Sam and Bill!"

Then Blue Beard rushed in with his drawn sword (he had drawn it at a gift show), and was about to dispatch her to the happy croaky-ing grounds of her sex, when her brothers Sam and Bill dove in and blew old Blue Beard's brains out with doubled-barreled bowie knives.

The widow B. inherited his money, together with the remains of his other wives, with which she was enabled to set up a Museum of Anatomy, finally marrying a side-showman. Her sister Anna was united to a gentleman by the name of Dominie, becoming *Anna Dominie*, though what year this was I can not say. Blue Beards went out with the eminent and excessive widower of that name, and haven't been in since to my knowledge.

Readers and Contributors.

TO CORRESPONDENTS AND AUTHORS.—No MSS. received that are not fully prepaid in postage.—No MSS. preserved for future orders.—Unusable MSS. promptly returned only where stamps accompany the inclosures, for such return.—Book MSS. postage is two cents for every four pages, or fraction thereof, but must be marked Book MSS. and be sealed in wrappers with open end, in order to pass the mails at "Book rates."—No correspondence of any nature is permissible in a package marked as "Book MSS."—MSS. which are imperfect are not used or wanted. In all cases our choice rests first upon clarity of thought; second, upon excellence of MS.; "copy," third, length. Of two MSS. of equal merit we always prefer the shorter.—Never write on both sides of a sheet. Use Commercial Note size paper as most convenient to editor and compositor, tearing off each page as it is written, and carefully giving it its folio or page number.—A rejection by no means implies a want of merit. Many MSS. unavailable to us are well worthy of use.—All experienced and popular writers will find it ever ready to give their offerings early attention. Correspondents must look to this column for all information in regard to contributions. We can not write letters except in special cases.

Can not use contributions by M. J. B. No stamps. We return MS. on "Business." It lacks the point so essential in such essays.—We do not want the stories referred to by J. B. New York city.—We return MS. "Fearsful Warning."—Will use: "Old Willoughby and the Robbers." "In a Rattlesnake Den." "Doctoring Under Difficulties." "My Brother's Wife." "Won by the Waves." "In a Saw-whet." "The Will of the Mimble." "Old Dave's Taste of Fire." "Fixing for Burglars."

Can make no use of matter like that submitted by H. W. Ditto, "Cats," by J. S. D., "Race for Life." No stamps.—Ditto, "Decelt," by Juno.—Can not use "Lost and Won." No stamps.—We return "Haskell's Crime" and "Pittsboro's Crime." "Life in the Pit." "A Human Rat." "Six Girls." "A Parody." "The Lost Bird." "The False Diamond." "A Thrice Told Tale."

Præcy J. Can not write to you. See our rules, as given above. The "Federalist" was chiefly the production of Alexander Hamilton. His descendants are numerous.

ALICE. Miss Alice Cary was fifty years old at her decease. She was a devoted mother, but in good circumstances. Her sister Phoebe lives in this city.

K. G. S. Jay Cooke is a Western man—born and reared in Sandusky, Ohio. Henry D. Cooke, the Washington banker, and Pittsboro's mayor, is one of the New York city house of Jay Cooke & Co., and are brothers of Jay—all Buckeyes. Henry D. was, for years, a Journalist.

DEK PIKE wants to know if it is true that Joe Jefferson earns \$500 per day playing Rip Van Winkle. It is true. Joe's receipts in the long engagement lately played at Booth's theatre, were over that sum, daily. But, where one man in the profession succeeds, many fail, as in all other professions. Jefferson's home is Hoboken, New Jersey, where he has a very beautiful place, in the romantic Saddle River Valley.

CLARA DUNN is anxious to "learn how to paint." Her only course is first to take a thorough course of drawing lessons; then a course of lessons of Nature Sketching; then lessons of drawing from casts and living models; then to attempt coloring under the tuition of some good artist. The study of landscape, figure, animal or still life. Study—work—patience! This it is to be an artist.

"What is the style now for wedding-cards?" asks Mary D. G. If Mary wants the style she must follow the following in her order to the engraver (for all wedding cards must be engraved, of course): first, the bride's card; second, the groom's; thirdly, the bride's mother's; then the groom's mother's; then the cards containing the married name of the young couple in full, and the days of their post-honeymoon reception; then a card containing the names of the bridesmaids, ushers and groomsmen; and lastly, a card engraved with "Please present this to the door." That's the style. It is yours of course, if you are a fish and fumbley; but, what of that? You might as well not marry as to venture without all the concomitants—so much is your position dependent on these things.

J. H. is informed that Mr. Aiken has not retired from the stage; that the absurd "Steam Man" never ran a race with any thing; that Bruin Adams will soon give us another romance; that the SATURDAY JOURNAL is making grand strides in popular favor, greatly to the dismay of some of the Old Style weeklies.

Mrs. M. C. L. asks several questions in regard to flowers and their culture. All the information required will be found in the Catalogues of Vick, of Rochester, or Henderson, of New York—both of whom are very successful florists. Now is the time to attend to the flowers.

CRUSOE. If you can prove your assertion in regard to the party who threatens the suit, you are not liable. The father of a reformer is responsible for his son. B. VARDILL. We can not advise you in the matter.

A CONSTANT READER asks if Mr. Albert Aiken will write another story similar in style to the "Ace of Spades" and the "Secret of the Sea." We can not say. Mr. Aiken is at present engaged on a serial the scene of which is located in an entirely new field. He is a quiet reserved man, but declares that he thinks it will be the most popular story that he has ever written.

BABY ELEPHANT. 150 to 175 pages. According to merit.

VICTOR inquires concerning the Girondists. In 1790 the department of the Gironde, in the Legislative Assembly, among its representatives, three men of eloquence and talent, who became the leaders of a celebrated political party during the Revolution; hence the members of the party came to be named Girondists. Its principles were republican. The party was powerful but not always consistent, during the continuance of that party came to be named Girondists. In the Convention, the Girondists at first commanded a majority, but on the king's trial they were much divided; and being pressed by the violence of the sections of Paris, they were at length expelled from the Assembly. Thirty-four of them were outlawed; and in October, 1793, twenty-five of them were guillotined; others put an end to themselves. Madame Roland, wife of a minister of that name, was one of the distinguished members of the Girondist party, and was executed when the party fell. She was authoress of a celebrated composition entitled the *Appel au Peuple*.

Eva writes: "I am just seventeen, and have engaged myself to a man who is not the kind of my parents. When they know of my engagement they will not consent to my marrying the gentleman, for his father and my father do not like each other at all. I am sure that I shall never love any one else half as well as I do this gentleman, and I am sure, too, that he loves me devotedly. Despairing of ever gaining the consent of my father to a union, we have thought of an elopement. Would it be very wrong?" Yes; we believe so. We believe that the cases in which elopements can be justified are so exceedingly rare that the practice must be at all times condemned. An elopement rarely takes place without some positive social law being broken—such as disobedience to parents or marriage in your case; and it exposes the unfortunate girl who consents to it to the most imminent peril. She throws herself upon the honor and protection of a person who has it in his power at any moment to ruin her. Elopement is, also, generally the resource of two individuals who are in such a state of excitement and thoughtlessness that they know not what they are doing, and are incapable of weighing the consequences of their conduct. We, therefore, can by no means sanction elopement; on the contrary, we warn all young ladies to beware, and look well before they leap. Wait till you are of age; and, in the meantime, do all in your power to gain the consent of your parents. If they find that you and your lover are really attached to each other, they may cease their opposition.

A SMOKE. Meerschaum, literally, means sea-fog. The appearance of this substance before its manufacture somewhat resembles foam. It is stated to be found floating in the Sea of Azov, and on the shores of Samos and Negropos. From either of these circumstances its name, "sea-foam," may have been derived. It consists of hydrate of magnesia, with silica, carbonate and water. It is dug from the earth in several places in Turkey, where it is used as soap. The tobacco-pipes are made in Turkey by a process analogous to that for making potteryware, and imported into Germany, where they are prepared for sale by soaking them first in wax, then in tallow, and finally polishing them with shave-grass or crabs. The latter is used to remove scratches or imperfections from those injured in packing. Artificial meerschaums are made with fine plaster of Paris, baked for a few hours, and thrown, while warm, into melted wax or linseed oil.

A. T. L. There are no respectable matrimonial offices in New York, or anywhere else, for that matter. If you trust to their promises you are sure to regret your credulity.

THESEAN asks concerning *Shakespeare's* wife. The poet was married to Ann Hathaway, before the close of the year 1582. He was then only eighteen years of age; his wife was considerably older than himself. She died on the 6th day of August, 1623, aged sixty-seven years.

H. S. The manufacture of plate-glass was first begun in Lancashire, in 1778.

Unanswered questions on hand will appear next week.

THE DEAR OLD CHIMNEY CORNER.

BY E. E. REXFORD.

Let others sing of pleasant nooks,
Of haunts in glen or glade;
Of singing-birds and dancing brooks,
Of sunshine and of shade,
But let me sing of that dear spot—
Home's dearest, best adornment,
Whose pleasant scenes are ne'er forgot,
The dear old Chimney Corner.

Now that the old days are gone,
And life seems much forlornier,
We, thinking of old times, can say,
God bless the Chimney Corner.

At evening, when the outside world
Was wrapped in gloom of night,
We'd draw our chairs together close
About the warm firelight;
And mother'd tell of olden times,
And father'd gently warn her,
If any detail was forgot,
About the Chimney Corner.

And when the time for parting came,
Our good old father'd read
Some chapter from the Holy Book,
And all of us gave heed;
And then he'd kneel, and mother, too,
The firelight flickering on her,
And every night a prayer went up
From out the Chimney Corner.

And then we'd say to each good-night,
And kiss sweet mother's brow;
Dear mother! That was long ago,
And you're no longer young;
And father was so lonely when
To her low grave we'd borne her,
That ere a year had passed away
He left the Chimney Corner.

Strange Stories.

JUANITA;

OR,

The Eve of St. John.

A STORY OF OLD SPAIN.

BY AGILE PENNE.

The setting sun cast its last golden rays upon town, hill and bay, then sunk to rest behind the forest-fringed peaks of the sierras. The flood of golden light no longer bathed the roof-tops of Almacencar village, that like an eagle's nest hung on the side of the rocky sierra. But, in the streets of the little hamlet, lights were gleaming and bonfires burning. Troops of peasants, gayly clad in holiday attire, filled the narrow streets and the broad plaza that formed the center of the town.

It was the Eve of St. John, and all were preparing for the festival day.

On a stone bench, close by the door of the little inn that fronted on the square, and bore for its sign a rude picture of a Golden Goat, sat two young men. From their sober garb, its fashion, and the long hair that curled down over their ears, one would have pronounced them students. And so they were; scholars of the dark convent that frowned upon the hamlet from the crest of a neighboring hill.

One was called Luis Amador, a handsome youth with jet-black eyes and hair; handsome, despite the look of sadness that clouded his face. His friend was known as Henrique, a wild and thoughtless blade.

"Why ever so sad?" questioned Henrique.

"Have I not enough to make me sad?" replied Luis. "Look upon yonder castle," and he pointed as he spoke to a lordly tower, that, perched upon a spur of the sierra, kept watch and ward over town and sea. "Six months ago I was the lord of yonder castle, the last heir of Amador's line. But, on my father's death came a stranger with many a parchment proof of debt, by my father owed. He wrenched my estate from me, and to-day, I stand a landless beggar. My cousin, too, the fair Marina, once my plighted wife, but now—with loss of fortune came loss of love."

"If the blue-blooded belle forsakes you, the damsel of low degree is more kind. Juanita, the maid of the inn here, thinks all the world of thee."

"True, I have guessed her secret," Luis replied, sadly. "Henrique, this night I am determined to know my fate. In some ancient book have I read a strange old legend of the night of the Eve of St. John. If an anxious lover stands within the churchyard at the midnight hour, and casts over his shoulder three slips of olive, that have felt the touch of water blessed by the church, and invokes the maiden of his fate, the semblance of his future wife will appear before him. To-night I will try if the legend be truth or falsehood."

"Luck go with you, comrade; but come, let's to supper, for the night draws on apace."

The two friends departed. Hardly were they out of sight, ere a man stepped from the shadow of the inn door, where he had listened to the conversation of the two.

The listener was Gabriel, the usurping Count of Amador.

"Would that Satan waited for him in the churchyard!" cried the dark-browed count, violently.

"A pious wish, truly," replied a voice that came from the side of the inn where the shadow was dense.

Gabriel turned in amazement; then, from his resting-place on the earth by the wall of the inn, rose a stalwart fellow, roughly clad. Bravo and trickster were written in his face.

"Ruy Guinart!" exclaimed Gabriel.

"The same, ex-brigand, ex-gamster, ex-every thing that mother church condemns and honest men avoid."

"What do you seek here?"

"You, comrade old of mine. The world has used you well. I would share your good fortune; besides, I have certain papers to sell you. The receipts given by your father to the old count of Amador, for money paid; the receipts stolen by a false servant, and in the absence of which, you have been able to seize the estates of Amador. Will you buy them, or shall I seek the outcast heir that left but now?"

"No, no!" cried Gabriel, hastily. "I will pay whatever you demand. But, a word upon another subject. Sit down."

The two seated themselves upon the stone bench. They did not notice that a girl's face was peering through the lattice windows of the inn upon them, or that her ears were eagerly drinking in their words.

"This Luis goes on a fool's errand to the old churchyard to-night," Gabriel said.

"Yes, I heard."

"He must never leave that spot alive."

"Good! I'm your man."

"Have you the papers with you?"

"Yes; they were stolen by a servant of the count, after his death. He intended to sell them to you."

"I know; he approached me on the subject; I appointed a time and place to see him. He never came. Thinking that by

some accident the papers were lost, I immediately presented my claims and seized the estate. I have a friend at court, and by his aid I obtained the title as well as the castle."

"The man who approached you was killed in a street brawl; mine was the hand that struck him. Of course I naturally inherited all he had," said the ruffian, coolly. "Why have you delayed so long in seeking me?"

"A slight difficulty with the gentlemen of the black robe, the infernal police. I was obliged to take to the rocks of the sierra for safety, like a hunted wolf. But, that little affair is blown over, and who will dare to suspect the friend of the noble Count of Amador?" And the ruffian chuckled as he spoke.

"I can not rest easy in my title while that young stripling, Luis, lives," Gabriel said, thoughtfully.

"You shall rest easy, noble count; my dagger will remove him from your path. The churchyard is far up on the side of the hill. At midnight all the village will be buried in slumber. We can crush out his life as easy as to drown a blind kitten."

"We had better not be seen together, at the present," Gabriel said. "At eleven I'll meet you here, then we'll post ourselves in the road that leads to the churchyard; wait till this Luis passes; then follow him, and in the churchyard remove him from the world."

"The plan is as simple as the washing of hands," and the brigand rose as he spoke. "Till eleven, then, farewell."

Ruy stalked off with a swaggering gait. Gabriel watched him for a moment in silence.

"When a man meditates evil, Satan himself sends the tools to his hands. My mind is fixed; Luis must perish."

The moon, in crescent form, shed its faint light over hill and dale, danced in shining ripples on the sea, and bathed the forest-crowned crests of the rocky range with its silvery beams.

Up the steep and rugged path that led to the churchyard the true heir of Amador toiled.

Closely clasped within his hand he held the three sprigs of olive. His brow was gloomy as ever, and strange thoughts were in his mind.

"If the legend be true," he murmured, "I shall see my future bride. What form will float, vision-like, before me? Shall I

see the haughty face of Marina, the woman who loved me in my pride of power, and who deserted me when the clouds of misfortune gathered thick around my head? or shall I see the pretty face of the village beauty who loves the outcast and the friendless wanderer?"

Absorbed in thought, Luis did not heed the two dark figures that, like grim phantoms, tracked his path. Little recked the young man of the danger that lurked so nigh.

Luis gained the churchyard.

The moonlight gleamed fitfully and coldly on the headstones that marked the graves. The soft wind sighed with a mournful sound as it stirred the leaves of the trees that shaded the resting-place of the dead.

The gloom and silence fell like a shroud upon the soul of the young man, as he stood within the sleeping-place of the dead and waited for the convent-bell to tell that the midnight hour had come.

Clear on the night-air came the silver tones of the monitor.

"Maiden of my fate, from my hand I cast the leaves of the blessed olive; here, on the Eve of good St. John, I summon thee to appear before me!" Thus spoke the young man. Despite himself, his voice trembled as he delivered the invocation.

Then, from the shelter of one of the large gravestones, rose a female form, the hand extended, as if in warning.

The face and form were in the shade thrown by a neighboring tree, yet the strained eyes of Luis clearly recognized the person of Juanita, the maid of the inn.

With a wild laugh that rung shrilly through the churchyard, Luis threw up his hands as though to shut the vision from his sight; advanced a few steps, and then fell senseless to the earth.

The overwrought brain sought refuge in the semblance of death.

The female form disappeared.

Then, from the shadows of the churchyard-wall, came the dark forms that had tracked the young man up the mountain-steep.

Like wolves, the two advanced with stealthy tread. In their hands gleamed the bright steel of the assassin's dagger.

Cautiously they looked around them as they advanced. No sound, save the night-breeze stirring the leaves; no human shadows on the ground, save their own. A minute more, and they bent over the senseless form of young Amador. The hand of the assassin was raised to give the blow; another second, and the bright steel would have been dyed crimson with human blood. But the arm that was raised to give the blow never descended to pierce the white

throat of Amador with the steel that the hand gripped.

Forth from the concealment of the grave-stone sprang the female form which the frenzied brain of Amador had taken for the spirit of the village beauty.

Thinking they looked upon a phantom form from the other world, the two—master and hireling—would have sought safety in flight; but, from the shelter of the tombstones, came a half-dozen black-robed shadows that barred their way.

No visions this time, but alguazils, the ministers of justice. Quickly they overpowered the two, and from the pocket of Ruy they drew the precious papers that proved the right of Luis to the castle of Amador.

Slowly the young man came back to consciousness; and when he opened his eyes he gazed into the face of Juanita, the maid of the inn; the girl who had not only saved his life, but given him back his fortune and title.

The legend of the Eve of St. John proved to be a true one, after all.

It was the face of Juanita that appeared to Luis when he pronounced the charm of the midnight hour. It was Juanita who stood by his side when a holy father of the church read the marriage rites and called down a blessing upon the heads of the Count and Countess of Amador.

The Eve of good St. John had brought joy to the good and evil to the wicked.

George's Garnet.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

PRETTY little George Greyson, with her starry-blue eyes and peach-bloom cheeks, all blushes and dimples, was certainly a maiden to enrapture any man's heart; and Carlos Leigh, as he looked from his window across a shady angle of Leigh Court into the room where George sat reading, all unconscious of his scrutiny, agreed with all his heart to the universal opinion expressed by the many visitors at Leigh Court.

Not only did he admire her as she sat there, but away down in his heart he was wondering if George would accept the love he intended offering her the very first time he had a good chance; for, to his knowledge, George was not the maiden to make opportunities for any lover to declare himself.



GEORGE'S GARNET.

Not she, pretty, airy, lissome George! If Carlos Leigh wanted her, he well knew he would have to strive for his prize.

And a prize George Greyson would be to any man; not alone for her arch, bewildering beauty, that made admirers on the spot, or particularly for her winsome ways and engaging address, and her rare, keen intelligence.

There was an air of womanly tenderness about her; a sort of latent devotion toward the chivalry and courtesy of men that made her attractive beyond other women; and to Carlos Leigh, as he thought of all these manifold attractions, she seemed unspeakably precious to him.

He was in every way worthy of her, though he did not himself know that; for, with all his many characteristics, Mr. Leigh was possessed of one trait seldom met with in the sterner sex—especially among those who are wealthy and possessed of good looks—and that was modesty and an absence of self-conceit.

So, in loving George Greyson, he fondly imagined how he was honored by her preference, and at the thought came a knowledge that he was not sure, after all, that George positively loved him.

True, her eyes had said it, but then a pretty girl's eyes and tongue, when it comes to the final point, often vary quite a little.

Carlos Leigh knew little George had a stern sort of father—a rough old sea-captain—who had long since outgrown the soft blandishments of love, albeit he was a widower these many years; and he also knew there was a certain Miss Ernestine Gower staying at Leigh Court, a cousin of George's, whose home was with the Greysons at the sea-side cottage; and these two individuals might be stumbling-blocks in his way toward winning and wearing fair George.

But he very sensibly decided to offer George his love, trusting to the rosy god for success.

So, that very evening, when the moon was down, and the pillars on the front piazza cast a grateful shadow over the lovers, Carlos whispered it all to little, blushing George.

"If you only can love me in return, my darling! let me look into your eyes and see my doom? Ah! George, the ring I have brought will not be carried back by me, I think. Little George, take it, and if you are favorable, wear it—"

"Georgetta!"

And Miss Ernestine Gower's exquisite voice broke in upon the lovers.

With a little start and a half-guilty flush, George stepped away from Mr. Leigh, who bowed to Miss Gower.

She was a fascinating woman, perfectly aware of her charms, and knowing well how to use them to the best possible advantage.

She was poor and aspiring: Charles Leigh rich and handsome; why should she not win him as well as her cousin George?

So she stepped in between them, a faint sweet fragrance diffusing itself about her. She tapped George's glowing cheek with her white fan.

"You naughty girl! I've been searching all through the court for you. Didn't you know Julian D'Etour was come?"

Then she turned, with a smile, to Carlos, and her tones were just a trifle sarcastic.

"I hope I have not rudely interrupted a *tele-a-tele*, Mr. Leigh? My only shadow of excuse is Mr. D'Etour's urgent inquiries after George. You'd better go to him, my dear."

With Ernestine's brilliantly keen eyes watching every play of feature, George did not venture to raise her eyes, even for the one assuring glance she was so anxious to give Carlos.

So she hurried out, not noting the strange look that Mr. Leigh cast after her.

Just as soon as her trailing blue dress disappeared in the hall, Mr. Leigh turned to Ernestine, half angrily.

"Mr. D'Etour, you said, Miss Gower? A friend, I presume, of both of you."

"Oh, yes, a very dear friend of mine, I assure you; but—well—I don't know that I should call him exactly a friend of George's, considering that they two have been as good as engaged these three years."

He started so violently that Ernestine opened her eyes in well-bred astonishment. "It is nothing at all," he blundered, "one of those confounded bats against my ear. Good-night, Miss Gower."

He wheeled sharply away, vexed and feeling keenly the sword-thrust the chance words had made; while handsome Ernestine re-entered the parlors, strangely elated and bewildering.

Long after the family and guests at Leigh Court had sought their rooms that night, the light in George's window burned steadily on, and the fair girl, attired in her night robe, with her little pink, plump feet incased in softest velvet slippers, and her long black hair curling, unbound, over her shoulders, bent over her tiny writing-case—a bijou little affair she had brought from home.

On her dainty fore-finger the dark-red jewel burned with a quiet, steady glow, and George caressed it with a mute tenderness that would have rejoiced Carlos Leigh's heart could he have known of it.

Among the fluted, ruffled and embroidered pillow-cases Ernestine lay, with her blue-veined lids, dark-fringed with the curling bronzed lashes, resting on her white cheeks, and George glanced at her more than once.

"I know there is nothing wrong about my writing a line to Carlos, and telling him indeed I do return his love—only, I'd not want Ernestine to know it, because she is so—so different!"

With which very satisfactory argument, George dipped her pen in the little crystal ink-bottle.

But, when it came to the point, it was quite a difficult matter to say what she wished to; so, her pen rambled over the delicate cream-laid sheet, loth to write, yet more loth to leave unwritten the words swelling up in her heart.

"I am afraid to say 'dear Carlos,' and I don't like to call him Mr. Leigh—there, I'll just make a rude draft to-night, and copy it to-morrow."

So she wrote a few words very energetically, very rapidly.

"I hope I am not doing an unmaidenly act, when I tell you I do return the love you so kindly offered me."

Then she came to a sudden pause, and sat a long while absorbed in her own sweet thoughts.

Suddenly the clock struck one, and she put her head down, as if to sleep.

"There! my eyes must not be red to-morrow morning! I hadn't the slightest idea it was so late."

So she pushed paper and pen in the portfolio, turned out the gas, and in a few moments was far into a beautiful dream-world, where Carlos Leigh was the king, and she about to be crowned his bride.

It was after nine o'clock when George awoke, and Ernestine lay, still sleeping, beside her.

With a thrill of strange delight, George remembered the eyes of the past evening, and she involuntarily raised her hand to kiss the dear seal of Carlos Leigh's love.

She gave a quick little cry, that awoke Miss Gower.

"Oh, I wonder where it is—oh! Ernestine, I've lost—something!"

She sprang to the floor, searching all over the pink velvet carpet, while Ernestine lay among the ruffles and lace—smiling was it? George flew to her portfolio that lay just as she left it, but she had not dropped the

ring among the papers; then, worried and apprehensive, she sat down, her lips quivering.

"Perhaps now you'll tell me what you have lost, George?"

Ernestine had arisen, and was combing out her long bronze-gold hair.

A little flush tinged George's cheek, then she answered, bravely:

"My engagement-ring."

"Yes?" returned Ernestine, very matter-of-factly. "I imagined Mr. D'Etour would propose last night."

"Indeed, I'd not have him! You know that, Ernestine. I am engaged to Mr.—Mr. Leigh."

"You are?"

Miss Gower was quite surprised at first; then came across the room, and kissed George.

"I am glad, my dear."

"But I've lost his ring, and what shall I do?"

"Where had you it last?"

"Here, in this chair; I was writing very late last night, and when I went to bed I pushed every thing aside on the table—but the ring is not there; it was too loose, anyhow."

Ernestine searched through the portfolio.

"Why, George, where is the writing you did? there is none here—ah! I comprehend it all. The ring has gotten among the papers, and the strong wind between these windows has blown them out—that can be easily remedied."

So George brightened up and dressed herself in her prettiest white wrapper, and went down to explain it to Carlos.

She met him at the front door, so cold, so sternly frigid that her words froze on her lips.

"Mr.—Mr.—Leigh—I—I—"

"There is no need of any explanation. Good-morning, Miss Greyson!"

And he went down the graveled walk, leaving George nearly dying with the strange sensation she experienced.

Then she went back to her room and cried herself into a fearful headache, that kept her a prisoner all day; and the next, she and Ernestine were summoned home.

The brief, bright summer days passed on, giving place to golden-crowned, scarlet-footed autumn; and one lazily-lovely afternoon Captain Greyson sent a peremptory order for George to come to his dressing-room and to bring Ernestine.

And then, little dreaming that great joy was to come to her from that interview, poor, heart-sad George sat her down on a low hassock and heard the news her father had to communicate, while rage-stricken, thwarted, and disappointed Ernestine Gower gnashed her teeth at the captain's back.

It was a letter from Carlos Leigh that the old gentleman had that day received, inclosing a slip of paper written on in George's handwriting, a tiny little garnet ring, and a small golden chain that had once been Ernestine's, and that she had mourned as lost.

Then it was all explained: how Ernestine had bribed one of the maids at Leigh Court to take the note from George's desk—Ernestine having read it, and finding it suited to the case—and the ring from the sleeping girl's finger, and deliver them to Mr. Leigh with Miss Greyson's compliments; this, all because thereby, Ernestine could declare, if ever need came, that she never had touched either letter or ring.

This note Carlos had entirely misconstrued; it admitted of it, and the absence of the endearing terms George wanted, yet dreaded to employ, completed the mistake.

But the servant maid had met with great misfortune. The Leighs had befriended her, and she confessed it all. So, that very evening, with the garnet once more on her finger, she told Carlos, when he came, how she loved him, how Mr. D'Etour, whose friendly call had sown the first seed of jealousy, under Miss Gower's hand, was only a friend.

And while Ernestine, from her window above, as she packed her trunk to go forever home, heard their tender, confidential tones, she realized that deception works no ultimate good, however fair success seems for the time.

The White Witch:

OR,

THE LEAGUE OF THREE.

A STRANGE STORY OF AMERICAN LIFE.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.

AUTHOR OF "HEART OF FIRE," "WOLF DEMON," "SCARLET HAND," "ACE OF SPADES," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE SNARE.

LEONE was pacing restlessly up and down her apartment. A look of deep anxiety was on her handsome features.

"Three o'clock," she murmured, consulting her watch; "he will soon come then. Oh! it is agony to reflect that I am forced to betray the man that I love so well. But I can not help it. I am in the toils, and must do my master's will."

Then her quick ear heard the sound of Montgomery's footsteps in the entry approaching her door. She had learned to know her lover's footsteps from all others.

"It is he," she murmured. Montgomery knocked lightly at the door. "Come in," said Leone, her voice tremulous with joy.

The young man entered the room.

He extended his hands toward the girl; eagerly, with a bright smile of joy upon her face, she gave herself up to her lover's caresses.

"Are you glad to see me?" he asked, smoothing back the dark hair from the white forehead and gazing fondly in the upturned face that nestled on his breast.

"Can you doubt it?" she replied.

"No!" he exclaimed, touching with his lips the low, sweet forehead.

"But, come, sit down," he said. "I've something to say to you, Leone."

A shade passed over the girl's face, and a strange expression shone in her dark eyes as the words fell upon her ears. It was but momentary, and Montgomery noticed it not.

Leone released herself from the embrace of her lover and pushed a large cushioned rocking-chair with huge arms toward him. Montgomery seated himself in it. Then Leone brought a small chair, and placing it by the side of the other, sat down in it, resting her arms upon her lover's, and with a smile, wherein anxiety was strangely blended with affection, waited for Montgomery to speak.

"Leone, in order that you shall fully understand what I wish to say to you, it is necessary to speak a little of my past life," he

said, gazing earnestly into the face of the girl. "A month, or so ago I was worth over a hundred thousand dollars, and was engaged to be married to a beautiful and wealthy girl, one of the reigning belles of New York. One night, at a masquerade in Newport, a woman, dressed all in white, and who called herself the White Witch, predicted that within one month or one year, I would lose both my fortune and the lady that I loved. The month has expired. Nearly all the prediction has been fulfilled. The lady broke the vows that she had made, and by a series of disasters I have lost almost all my fortune. Now I am coming to the part that concerns you. When I left you yesterday, as I was passing down stairs, a letter was handed to me. It was from the mysterious woman who, at Newport, had called herself the White Witch. It contained a request that I should meet the writer at a certain place at nine in the evening, and also told me that more misfortunes threatened me."

"I kept the appointment and met the woman. She was carefully disguised. Now, Leone, judge of my astonishment when I found that she knew of our engagement. She warned me against your love—said that it was a fatal passion that would drag me to my ruin."

"And do you believe her words?" asked Leone, quietly, and looking full into Montgomery's face with her brilliant, dark eyes.

"Leone, have I said that I believed her?" replied Montgomery, reproachfully.

"No," Leone said, with a sad smile.

"Leone," and Montgomery passed his arm fondly around the little waist of the girl as he spoke, "is your love fated to bring me to ruin?"

"How can I tell? Can I read what is in the future? But, Angus, perhaps there is a way to avoid the evil?"

"How?"

"Give me up," and Leone hid her face on his breast as she spoke.

"Give you up?" cried Montgomery, quickly. "Oh, Leone, you can not guess the pain that those few words give me; and can you speak them calmly?"

The girl did not reply, but kept her face hid.

"Leone, you do not answer," he said.

"I can not," she murmured, faintly.

"Lift up your head and let me look at your face," he said, after a moment's pause.

"No, no," she murmured.

"Leone," he said, reproachfully.

The tone touched her. Slowly she raised her head until her eyes met those of Montgomery.

A single look into her face and the lover read the truth.

The tear-drops were glistening in the large, black eyes.

"The thought does give you pain?" he exclaimed.

"And yet, for your sake, I will bear it," she said, earnestly.

"You will give me up?"

"Yes."

"And do you think, even for a single instant, that I would permit you to do such a thing?" he cried, quickly.

"Leone, I begin to believe that you do not fully realize how much I do love you."

"But if that love is to prove your ruin—"

she said, faintly, again sinking her head down upon his breast.

"Let it come! I care little for the future if I have your love to bless and cheer me. Let the road of fortune be rough or smooth, I care not, so long as I know that I am battling for you. Leone, you don't know what a great thing it is for a man to feel that there is one heart in this world that he can call all his own. It gives one double courage in the great life-fight. Love is the most powerful motive that this world has ever known."

With closed eyes and a beating heart, the girl listened to the passionate words. They were as the waters of life to her crushed and bleeding heart. The future rose before her bright and beautiful. She saw herself the happy wife of the man on whose bosom her head rested. She felt the throbbing of that heart that beat for her alone.

"Angus," she said, raising her head slowly, until her eyes met his. "I have said that I loved you, and those words are cold and feeble to express the feeling that is in my heart. You are all in all to me—my world. Your love would make all my future life one blissful dream. Your love builds for me a great and glorious castle, but it is a castle in the air; no mortal foot can reach it. I must first walk through the dark valley of death; then, perhaps, I may enjoy the dream of happiness that now is only a dream."

"Leone, if my love can make you happy, then you will be happy. I have your promise, and no power on earth can prevent me from claiming you as my wife!" exclaimed Montgomery, firmly.

"But I am almost a stranger to you," the girl said, with downcast eyes.

"I have faith! This mysterious woman last night tried to shake my confidence in you. She bid me ask you concerning your relations with this Lionel O'Connell."

Leone could not repress a slight start.

"Why are you agitated?" asked Montgomery, noticing the impulsive movement of the girl.

"Angus, I can not tell you," said Leone, quickly.

"Then there is something in the words of the woman? There is a secret understanding between you and O'Connell?"

"Yes," Leone replied, slowly.

"And that secret?"

"I can't tell you now," Leone answered.

"Will there be a time when you can reveal this secret to me?"

"Yes," Leone answered, eagerly.

"That is all I ask; I am satisfied with that assurance," Montgomery said, calmly.

"You still love me?" Leone asked, earnestly.

"Love you! yes! as deeply as ever man loved woman!" Montgomery answered, impulsively.

"Even when I tell you that there is a secret connected with my life that I can not reveal to you?" Leone asked, with her dark eyes fixed eagerly on Montgomery's face.

"Leone, I love and I trust you!" Montgomery exclaimed, and again he drew the head of the girl to his heart, and kissed the ripe, red lips, so fresh in their dewy sweetness.

"You do love me!" Leone said, softly.

"How well, you will one day learn," he replied.

Then to the mind of the girl came the sickening thought that she had a task to perform; the will of O'Connell to carry out. And even at the very moment when Montgomery's strong arms were pressing her to his heart, and his deep voice was whispering the sweet words that told of love and joy eternal, she must close her ears to the hon-

eyed melody, and soiled her mind with schemes of deception—nets of lies to entrap the noble heart on which her head was pillowed. Oh! how she longed for freedom from the bonds that bound her to that iron master's will.

"Angus, there has been a sudden change in my fortunes," she said, in hesitating accents.

"Yes; I know," he interrupted, gently caressing the silken locks that covered the shapely head.

"You know?" she asked, in astonishment.

"Yes; I met Mr. O'Connell as I entered the hotel. He told me all about the loss of your property. Leone, will you not let me be your banker?" he asked, softly.

"You?"

"Yes; I shall charge you a terrible interest—payable in kisses," and he laughed lightly as he spoke.

"Angus, you are too good to me," she murmured. Montgomery did not notice the bitterness in the tones.

"Good? Not at all!" he replied. "Luckily I've my check-book with me."

A table with pen and ink stood near Montgomery's chair. He drew it up to him and tore a check out of the book.

"You will soon be my wife, Leone; do not hesitate to accept a little of your property in advance. What sum shall I put on the check?"

"Why, I—," Leone hesitated, she hardly knew how to answer.

"Have it!" Montgomery exclaimed. "I'll leave it blank—just sign my name to it. You can fill it up for any sum you like. It is to order; and that you shall have no trouble, I'll step down to the bank to-morrow morning and give instructions in regard to it. These paying-tellers are terrible careful fellows, and there might be some trouble about it."

Then Montgomery signed his name to the check and gave it to her.

She took it almost mechanically.

"That's good for thirty thousand dollars, pet; that's all that I have left in the world, but I don't suppose you will need quite so large a sum as that," and Montgomery laughed.

Leone hid her face in her hands. She could not speak; her heart was too full.

"Don't look sorrowful," said Montgomery, as, rising, he drew her slight figure fondly to his breast. "I must say good-by for the present. I have a business appointment at four o'clock. I will come again to-night."

"In the future I hope to be able to prove to you how much I love you," Leone murmured as she clung fondly to the breast of her lover.

"Good-by."

Again and again Montgomery pressed the soft, loving lips. It is so hard for lovers to part.

"I am not worthy of his love!" Leone cried in despair, as the door closed behind her lover. "I have given him into the hands of his enemies; betrayed to ruin the man that loves me! Oh! I will not carry out this vile scheme! O'Connell shall not have this check; I'll destroy it at once!"

But a strong hand wrested the precious paper from her.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

AN UNWILLING INSTRUMENT.

LEONE turned in astonishment and beheld Lionel O'Connell.

"Oh, no, my dear!" he said, sneeringly, and putting the hand that held the note behind him, "this precious bit of paper is not to be destroyed."

Angry fires flashed from Leone's eyes.

"Lionel, give me back that paper!" she cried.

"Hallo!" he said, in pretended amazement; "is that the tone to address me with? You are forgetting yourself, my dear Leone."

"I will be your slave no longer!" she cried. "I will not betray the man that loves me so well. I know that you mean to use that paper to work him evil. You shall not, if I can prevent it!"

"Leone, again I say that you are forgetting yourself," said O'Connell, coolly, and not at all affected by the girl's passionate outburst.

"No, but I have forgotten—forgotten all that was good and stopt—so that all that was evil at your bidding. I will do so no longer!" All the fire in Leone's nature was roused; undaunted she faced the cool and smiling man who seemed only to laugh at her angry words.

"You do not remember a certain promise, then?" he said, meaningly.

"Yes, I do remember; but I am sure that she to whom I gave that promise will look down from her home above and absolve me from it, when she knows the dreadful deed that you wish to force me to commit!" replied the girl, spiritively.

"You will not listen to reason, then?"

"No! give me back that paper!"

"And if I do not?" asked O'Connell.

"I will go to Angus Montgomery!"

"What!" and a fierce light blazed in O'Connell's eyes as he uttered the exclamation. "You will go to Montgomery?"

"Yes, and tell him of the snare that his love for me, and my weak compliance with your command, has led him into."

Leone did not quail before O'Connell's frown, but faced him with a face as angry and a will as firm as his own.

"I have always taken you to be a sensible girl," he said, slowly.

"And now do you change your opinion because I will not betray the man that I love?"

"You prefer, then, to betray me?"

"Betray you?" she said, in wonder.

"Yes, of course. You agreed to perform this service for me. In consideration of that service, I agreed to release you from the promise—which, mind, I did not ask you to make—which binds you to follow my fortunes, be they good or be they bad. Have I not stated the truth?"

"Yes."

"Well, then, you break your word with me, do you not? You betray me."

"Be it so; I do betray you," said Leone, firmly.

"You have decided?"

"Yes."

"Don't you think that you had better wait awhile, give the matter a little thought and not answer so hastily?" O'Connell said, coolly.

"It is useless. I shall not change my mind. I have decided, for the first time in my life. I know what the passion of love is. I have never felt it before; but now, it fills my heart, sways my nature and creates a new life for me!"

"For the first time in your life you are doing something stupid," O'Connell said, with a sneer. "Why do you attempt to fight against me? The contest is useless. I have marked

Montgomery out for ruin; hunted him down inch by inch as the bloodhound runs down his prey. And now that the quarry is at my feet, my hand raised to give the coup de main—the master-stroke—that crushes the man I hate helpless to the earth, you coolly tell me to forego my vengeance, and refuse the aid you promised me. Upon my word, Leone, either you are crazy or I am," and O'Connell laughed loudly.

There was a hidden menace in his merriment that grated harshly on Leone's senses.

"Taunt as you please, Lionel; you will find that I'll keep my word," she said, coldly.

"And you will find that I will keep mine!" he cried, quickly. "Do you take me for a man of wax and think to mold me as easily? No, Leone, you will do my will!"

"Lionel O'Connell, you are foolish to think so!" Leone responded, firmly.

"Oh, am I?" he said, with latent sarcasm. "Just listen to me for a moment and perhaps you may change your opinion. You told me some time ago that you intended to tell Montgomery of the past. I suppose that you meant that you would tell him of the dark tragedy that clouds some eventful hours of your life?"

"Yes, tell him all," Leone answered.

"Tell him of your share in the transaction?"

"Yes."

"And do you think that he will marry you when he knows all?" there was a peculiar metallic ring in O'Connell's voice.

"If he loves me as well as I love him, he will," Leone answered.

"But there is a doubt. Look back at the past! Let me call to your memory a room in an old English manor house, lighted only by a single candle. A man and a woman sit in that room. Suddenly another man enters with a gun in his hand. Angry words fill the air; a shot follows that spills human blood. Two persons, alone, know who fired that shot, as the third one of the three, was killed by the shot. Suppose I—overcome by the tortures of a guilty conscience—go before a police-magistrate, confess my share in the crime and give the name of the woman who did the deed?"

Leone started in affright, while O'Connell gazed upon her with a look of triumph.

"You would not surely be so base?" she cried in horror.

"Try me and you will find out!" he replied, fiercely. "Leone, as well might the drowning man, sinking helpless in the waters of mid-ocean, call upon the heaving billows to spare him, as for you to make me spare Angus Montgomery, now that I have him in my power! You perceive, I hold you in fetters. Do my will in this, and I will give this man up to you as I promised. You can tell him what story you please; I will not contradict it. Come, do you agree?"

"Oh, I am utterly in your power!" Leone cried, despairingly.

"Yes, that is the word, 'utterly'!" he said, with an accent of triumph.

"I must obey—you force me to do it," and Leone sunk into a chair, burying her face in her hands.

"Now you are sensible. I had an idea that some foolish whim might enter your head—I know what follies this 'love' makes us all commit—so, when I saw Montgomery enter the hotel, I followed him up stairs. Luckily for my purpose, the room adjoining your bedroom was empty and open, and a door led from it into your apartment. I knew this. I've a capital little key here," and O'Connell took a small skeleton key from his vest pocket. "It opened the door between; so, concealed in your bedroom, I overheard all that passed between you two. Why, Leone, you really astonished me. I had no idea that you had so much tenderness in your nature. Why have you hid it all these long years? And O'Connell laughed his bitter, cynical laugh after putting the question.

"Lionel, spare me your words," Leone said, faintly. "Is it not enough that I am helplessly in your power? Do not taunt me because I am weak enough to love the man, who, perhaps, when he knows my sad story, may turn from me in loathing."

"Beauty is like charity, Leone, and covers a multitude of sins. One look in your eyes, one touch of your lips, and Montgomery will take you to his heart, forgive and forget all. But now having come to an understanding, I say adieu for the present. I'll call in again this evening as I come up town."

Then with a light step and a smile of triumph beaming on his face O'Connell left the room.

The hot tears filled Leone's eyes.

Tears relieve the heart overweighed with sorrow.

Tears are nature's remedy for the hurt spirit.

The willow wand bends that it may not break.

O'Connell's face showed plainly the satisfaction that filled his heart.

He descended the stairs with a light and careless air.

"Who says that fortune is a fickle jade?" he murmured. "To me her smile has ever been fair and constant. How quickly I broke the girl to my will. She is a stubborn piece of womanhood; too much like myself to be agreeable. It is as well that we are to separate."

How every thing seems to prosper with me. My will works like witchcraft. I think that I am sure of Frances Chauncy. I put Tulip Roche out of the question by my disclosure of his treachery. How nicely my chestnuts have been pulled out of the fire without my having to endanger my own dainty paws! Tulip Roche rides me of Montgomery; then Tulip, by his own act, rides me of himself. The field is clear, and I the favorite, booked to win in a canter," O'Connell laughed, merrily.

"Now, I must find this Montgomery. My conscience reproaches me for the part that I have taken in aiding Roche and Stoll in their infamous designs upon him. I'll make a clean breast of it, and then, Montgomery can fight Roche and Stoll. That's a glorious idea!" and O'Connell laughed again. "If Montgomery and Roche hate each other as bitterly as they should, there is a strong probability that there will be a conflict between them. One, or perhaps both, may be removed from my way. Ah, there's Montgomery, now."

O'Connell had caught sight of the young man standing in front of the hotel, apparently waiting for some one.

O'Connell tapped Montgomery on the shoulder.

"Montgomery, I was looking for you; I have something of great importance that I wish to say to you."

"Indeed! What is it?" asked Montgomery, a little astonished at the odd beginning, as well as at the earnest face of the other.

"Before I can speak, I must ask you to give me your promise that you will not reveal to any one from whom you received the information that I am about to impart."

"Certainly; I will give you the promise, willingly," Montgomery replied, although he could not divine why such a promise should be needed.

"Within a short time some heavy misfortunes have occurred to you, I believe."

Montgomery started. He looked at O'Connell, in wonder.

"Yes, you are correct. I have been very unlucky."

"Unlucky in having a false friend and a bitter enemy, though an open one."

"I do not understand," Montgomery said, slowly; but as he spoke, back to his mind came the thought of the words of the White Witch.

"A few words will explain. Do not ask me how I came into possession of the knowledge, because I am not at liberty to answer you. All these misfortunes that have come upon you can be traced to the agency of two men who have not hesitated to stoop to crime to accomplish their objects."

"And those two men?"

"Tulip Roche and Herman Stoll," O'Connell replied.

"But—pardon the doubt—how can I be sure that this information is true?" asked Montgomery.

"Charge Tulip Roche with it, boldly, or, better still, ask Frances Chauncy if it was not Tulip Roche who told her that you were engaged to be married to Miss Leone, when you had scarcely known her two hours. She will tell you the truth."

For the first time Montgomery guessed the cause that had separated Frances and himself. A veil seemed torn away from his eyes.

Then a painful suspicion entered his mind.

"Mr. O'Connell, answer one question, please. Has—has Miss Leone any knowledge of the acts of these two men?"

"No."

Montgomery's heart leaped for joy.

"I felt it my duty to tell you what I knew of the affair. Now, you can act your own pleasure," and O'Connell departed.

Montgomery remained; he was waiting for the Englishman.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 43.)

Oath-Bound: OR, THE MASKED BRIDE.

BY MRS. MARY REED CROWELL,
AUTHOR OF "SHADOWED HEART," "SCARLET CREST," ETC.

CHAPTER XXII. LIGHT IN DARKNESS.

IT was high noon of the next day when Bertrand Haighte awoke from the long, dreamless sleep that came so near bearing him into the great sea of Eternity.

He had been seriously shot, and had lain in prone unconsciousness all those long hours; alike unaware as to how the discharge of the pistol had attracted a chance passer-by, who had given the alarm; how Clifford Temple and Crystel's father had been sent for by the officer, who recognized him; how they had tenderly carried him to his hotel, with terrified awe that any one had dared attempt to take his life.

They could do almost nothing; true, detectives were scouring the vicinity, but there was not a trace left of the assassin's tracks; the woman next door, who let the lodgings, did not even know her tenant's name; the money had been in advance for the whole floor, and she didn't care for any thing else.

With sad, almost despairing faces, the family gathered around his side, while his mother held his hands in a motherly tenderness; his sisters weeping over him in his unconsciousness.

Little by little, life came flowing back through his veins; then, when every one save his mother had been kindly banished from the room, he slowly opened his eyes, and glanced around.

At first he smiled in Mrs. Haighte's face; then, like a lightning-flash, his memory awoke to a full sense of what had transpired.

"Quick—the police! Mother, Undine is alive—alive, and she tried to kill me!"

Then, when the secret had fled from his lips, he fainted again.

But it was enough; intelligence was instantly dispatched to the authorities, and the wildest excitement reigned among the few who had heard the news.

General Roscoe himself flew back to the jail, where the night had passed in such strangely torturous emotion to the sisters, to tell the wondrous news.

Hellce clasped her sister in her arms.

"My darling, let us thank God for this one ray of hope; it may be only a chimera, but dear Bertrand has imagined in the midst of his excitement; yet I think he is correct. You say he will recover, father?"

"We have every reason to believe so. I firmly believe God will raise him up to bring justice to light. Crystel, my angel child, I am glad to see you cry once more!"

The storm of tears that nothing could bring had flowed when she heard of Bertrand's danger; and she knelt, with clasped hands and streaming eyes, beside the little cot, in silent, agonizing prayer.

"Father, can you explain this awful mystery? If Undine Del Rose is alive, why should not Crystel go free this moment? If Undine was not murdered, who was?"

"That I can not say, my child. The proof of Bertrand's affidavit will soon be forthcoming if he was right. We have started a dozen detectives on her track—the smartest men in the profession. God send speedy success!"

Then, in his agitation to learn more of this strange news, he hastened back to Bertrand's bedside.

He had recovered again, and was doing well, and as it was simply impossible to keep him quiet when so much was at stake, the attending physicians declared that, as no unfavorable symptoms had manifested themselves, perhaps it would be a help, instead of a hindrance, to relieve his mind by discussing the affair with his friends.

"It is just six weeks ago to-day, Bertrand, that you applied for this; see?"

It was a large, business-like paper; and it needed but a glance to see it was a bill of divorce between Bertrand and Undine.

"I only wanted it for Crystel's sake; after we thought she was dead it was too late to stop proceedings. As it is, it is a good thing."

The second week of Bertrand's con-

valence brought the answer to the petition; his excellency had granted a respite of a month; a pardon was deemed inadvisable, owing to the existing state of affairs

she was an idiot; a silent, harmless, pitiful woman, who would sit all the day long holding her hands, never moving or speaking.

With all the agony of a strong love, Mrs. St. Havens had nursed her, and tended her through her long, tedious illness, during the delirium of which she had told over and over again her plans, her successes, until a complete confession was obtained that declared its own truthfulness.

After her recovery, Undine was carried to her old home, where, in the depths of her grief, Mrs. St. Havens cared for her, as a mother should.

For Undine was her own child; the daughter of Bertrand Haight's father, and Bertrand's half-sister! That was the cause of her impassioned warning to the wayward girl when she had declared she would marry Bertrand Haight, and that the reason of Clifford Temple's solemn caution; Temple knew the secret that the Haightes never had learned, and had loved the girl despite her illegitimate birth, which Mrs. St. Havens had sworn never to acknowledge.

Little had Bertrand dreamed that the threat that "Florin still lives," was meant Undine, whose name had been changed by her fearful mother; and of whom Mr. Haight had recorded the warning to his son, knowing that, in his moments of incense, there was a chance that his two children might meet and ignorantly love.

Hence, were his son and heir warned by the letter, he could escape the dream of possibly marrying his own sister by marrying no one. But an overguiding hand ruled it aright at last, and the remedy, though successful, had been but very little better than the disease.

It seems hardly necessary that we should go back over the story and gather up the threads by means of which the fated girl accomplished her ends; it is enough that, though successful, she was unsuccessful; and that at the last, with her reason gone, and not one of all her friends left—not even lawyer Allan, who had learned the use she made of him to procure his assistance, and whose treachery brought its own reward—she was doomed to drag a horrible life through to the grave.

We willingly leave her in a broken-hearted mother's hands, and bid her an eternal adieu.

Of Lida Hall's suicidal death her aunt never knew, or her uncle; they never heard from her, and believed her to be somewhere in the West.

Poor Lida! how the body drawn from the river was supposed to be Undine's was never explained; it is a mystery to-day—save to our readers.

And now to drop the curtain on these dark scenes forever!

Two years have passed on fleet wings, and now we invite our readers to the double wedding in the little Edenwilde chapel.

It is not as grand as you think becoming to the Roscoes, the Haightes and Temples; but when you remember the darkness that brooded so long, you will agree it is best.

The ceremonies have been pronounced, and the few guests have congratulated the brides; Clifford Temple and Lurline, his wife, have driven to Edenwilde, whither the wedding breakfast is to be celebrated; and Bertrand and Crystal linger a moment as their carriage drives up.

His arm is around her waist, and he is looking down in her pure, sad eyes, that wear a shadow happiness can never drive away.

"My own wife at last!"

"Yes, dearest Bertrand, and is not our happiness the sweeter that it has been so dearly earned?"

"We can never forget the dark days, darling; but we will look forward to the beautiful, bright ones that we shall enjoy forever together!"

Thus they started their life journey, but not unscathed by the fiery trial, yet purified and strengthened.

Meanwhile Hellice Roscoe and Gussie Haight are contentedly intrenched behind the earthworks they call single blessedness; the General and Mrs. Haight happy in their children's happiness.

And what more can be said?

THE END.

The Avenging Angels:

OR,
THE BANDIT BROTHERS OF THE SCIOTO.
A BORDER AND INDIAN TALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SILENT HUNTER," "QUEEN OF THE WOODS," ETC.

CHAPTER XII.
THE FLIGHT.

It was clear that the Shawnee warriors had ascended the heights above, whence they had discovered and fired on the Indian girl, while it was equally clear that on the other side one gallant friend was lying in ambush to aid and defend him.

To remain where he was would be useless, as there, being unable to see his enemies, his rifle was of no service.

But his decision was soon come to, and acted upon with true Indian cunning and sagacity.

Carefully stopping his rifle at the muzzle, and wrapping the lock round with a cloth, he glided into deep water, striking out for the side where the Shawnees were located. In this way he was able to swim slowly and steadily without being observed, until he was opposite the retreat occupied by Matata, the Prairie Rose.

Here he paused, and, clutching a bush, looked warily upward; not a sign of the enemy could he make out.

Then, without hesitation, he struck out across the stream, which ran swiftly and strongly, being aided by the buoyancy of another and far more dangerous fall.

The Indian, however, was both an accomplished and powerful swimmer, and, soon touching bottom, he hurried toward the white oak, saluted, however, by a shower of bullets, which, hastily fired, and being at long range, did him no harm.

Then again the remorseless western rifle spoke; a faint cry responded, and all relapsed into silence.

The meeting between Matata and Kenewa was a perfectly silent one, the warrior shouldering his rifle, shaking the water from his garments, and leading the way by a rude and rugged path to the summit of the wooded cliff.

In ten minutes more he was crouching un-

der a stunted oak tree, about ten feet from Steve.

The Indian made a low hissing sound, to which the other, without turning his head, nodded.

"Can you see the varmint?" asked Steve, after a moment given to that gravity which the red-skins so much admire.

"Does my brother see the tall pine, with a sassafras-bush at its base?" was the reply.

"Surely," said Steve.

"Behind it are three of the Shawnee dogs, in talk with one of the long-knives." Steve made no reply, but slipping a couple of extra balls into his barrel, he took aim at the thickest part of the sassafras-bush, and fired.

A double cry, and then the four men, two badly wounded, jumped up to seek some more secure shelter, not, however, before the Indian's rifle had spoken, and laid another low on the rock. A rapid but futile volley responded to this attack, the enemy firing to all appearance without any object except to waste their ammunition.

Now, Indians are generally very chary of powder, which in the wilds is not easily replaced.

Kenewa's mind was at once at work to discover a reason for this unusual firing, with which object he ascended nearer to the fall, and took a survey of the river above.

The secret was explained in a moment. The Bandits of the Scioto, with the aid of the Indians, had improved and enlarged the raft; which now, with quite twenty men upon it, was being propelled by poles across the stream, not fifty feet above the cataract, the force of the current bringing them slowly nearer. The raft, however, was perfectly under their command, and was making steadily for the shore.

With a grim smile, Kenewa took steady aim, selecting a tall Indian who seemed particularly expert with his pole or oar. Next instant, a sheet of flame, a loud crack, and the Shawnee warrior was foundering in the water, making frantic efforts to regain his post; while the raft, abandoned for a moment by all its rowers, swerved round, and was in another moment within the suck of the stream.

With a loud cry of rage and mortification, the whole body of whites and red-skins plunged into the water and swam for shore, except the wounded steersman, who, despite his wildest efforts to move up the river, was slowly rushing to destruction. So severely wounded as he was, he could not for a moment hope to save himself.

All rushed, friend and foe alike, to watch the event; and, ere an effort of any kind could be made to aid him, with one despairing glance at his companions, the wretched warrior was hurled over the ledge of rock and dashed lifeless into the pool below, which carried the bleeding body round and round, as in a whirlpool.

Then, again, all flew to cover, and Steve, summoned by the Indian, joined in what became absolutely necessary, a flight through the forest. It was only by the exercise of every art which practiced ingenuity could devise, that they could hope to escape the diligent search which the savage red-skins and villainous whites would make after them.

Kenewa led the way, trusting at first wholly to speed, the woods in that mountain region being generally clear of underbrush, and consisting of pines, which afforded no cover.

He took a downward track, however, leading to where the woods were thick. There the Huron's hope to hide in these dark woods until night, and it was for this purpose he made for the densest thickets, where, when they reached their confines, they were all obliged, in imitation of him, to stoop low and crawl for some distance. After crawling about a hundred yards the hard, pebbly bottom of a tributary to the larger mountain stream was entered.

Kenewa now placed his moccasins down in the water, almost without an effort, scarcely disturbing a stone as he did so, while, if little eddies of mud did arise, they were soon floated down the river, and the pebbles remained as before. Behind the red-skin came Matata, about whose presence Steve had not shown the faintest curiosity.

Last of all walked the scout, who, as he moved onward, carefully obliterated every sign of any one having walked in the stream. They were now on a plain, diversified by hillocks, gullies, and valleys, and considerably above the level of the prairie, to which, however, they were approaching, though far below the spot where existed the secret passage under the waterfall. It was part of Kenewa's plan to be within reach of this, as a final retreat, but at no price to betray the refuge on which their safety so much depended.

For some time they had moved in silence, the dense foliage making a kind of darkness visible; while the sides of the stream seemed, as it were, one solid mass of verdure, the boughs dipping into the water, which here was deeper and muddier.

Kenewa now halted and looked keenly around. It appeared evident that he had not been there for some time, for he scrutinized every trunk, every bough, every bush, as if he would have interrogated it.

At last he appeared satisfied, for he lifted up a heavy mass of boughs, passed under, held them up for the others to do the same, and then lowered them again.

Steve and Matata had both such complete confidence in the Indian that they followed him blindly.

They saw that they were in a natural arbor of small dimensions, formed by overhanging briers.

At the back was a sloping bank, the verdure of which was dank and heavy, and upon this Kenewa stepped silently, pointing up a steep incline, where gnarled roots and bushes seemed to revel in primitive luxury.

"If the Shawnee dogs find our trail, that is our only way," said Kenewa, quietly.

As he spoke he coolly seated himself on the slope to await the course of events. To his right was Steve, to his left Matata; the former longing, despite the danger, for the luxury of a pipe; the latter, with her thoughts fixed wholly on the warrior who sat beside her on the green bank within that strange refuge.

No one spoke; all listening eagerly for the first sign which might denote the presence of their deadly enemies.

After many weary hours, night came. Kenewa intended, as soon as darkness had lain like a funeral pall over nature for an hour or more, to venture forth and endeavor to reach the cave by one of the many secret paths which were familiar to his experience.

He was resolved, however, to be sure that the coast was clear ere he made such an attempt.

As yet nothing denoted that the enemy were in close pursuit; but Kenewa knew too well the character and nature of red-skins not to be aware that if half a dozen savages were outlying within a hundred yards of him, they would be neither seen nor heard. The great secret of success in all Indian surprises is the stealthiness with which they are carried out.

An hour passed, and Kenewa almost fancied that it was time to be on the move, when, suddenly, there seemed to strike upon his ear a sound, as of some one stepping on a dry twig.

The noise, whatever it was, evidently came from above the position occupied by the three fugitives. Kenewa bent his ear to the ground, and then clearly heard a cautious tread amid the trees, at some distance overhead. Laying down his rifle, he was about to crawl upward, when the quivering call of a loon, shrill, tremulous, loud, and somewhat prolonged, rose in close proximity to them.

"Tis Tom," whispered Steve, with a low, almost inaudible chuckle. "I taught the boy myself. He must come in at once, or he will pass the place."

"Tis Tom," replied Kenewa.

Steve knew to a nicety how far distant his pupil and protegee was, so that a kind of stifled whistle was sufficient signal. Then the young scout was noticed to stand still, as if in the act of listening. Steve repeated his signal.

Then he appeared fully to comprehend the position of those he was in search of, coming straight to their side, though not without disturbing both stones and sticks in his advance.

"Tis, man, his!" whispered Steve; "you walk as if you were a-going to meet!" If there's one savage in these here woods there's a hundred. The varmints ain't found us out yet; but they will mighty soon, if you don't mind."

Tom made no reply, standing still as a statue.

"A whisper, the flutter of a leaf, the fall of a pebble in the water, and our scalps will wave on the flag-poles of the Shawnees! They come!" whispered the Indian.

As he spoke all could hear a kind of low murmur, and through the narrow and almost imperceptible chinks of their green arbor they saw lights waving on high in the hands of the painted Indians, who were closing the stream.

By some means or other they had arrived at the conclusion that the fugitives had escaped by following the water-course.

The conclusion was a very natural one; for though the dense thickets might offer good cover to the noiseless moccasins of the native warrior, as he trod the secret and bloody war-path, it was not much calculated to hide a small retreating party, one of whom was a woman, another a pale-face.

The Shawnees came on, their black, ferocious eyes glancing at every place they supposed could contain the fugitives, beating the bushes with their tomahawks, and examining the bed of the stream with scrupulous care.

Like a group of statues in the silent night the fugitives stood, erect and motionless, leaning on their rifles, loaded and primed.

The Shawnees, who knew that their torches rendered secrecy out of the question, indulged loudly in conversation relative to the fugitives, mingled with imprecations, and the most direful threats as to what would be done if they only caught them.

Indians reached the part of the stream where Kenewa himself had halted; when, to the astonishment of all, they too paused.

Dead silence prevailed both within and without the cover.

The Shawnees were evidently struck with the dense green clothing of the banks, and resolved to examine it.

The hands of more than one warrior could be heard, pushing the bushes aside to peer within, and with a low sigh of intense excitement, the three men clutched their rifles. The next instant a broad sheet of flame rose, almost blinding the fugitives.

One of the Shawnees had incautiously approached his torch to the dense curtain of wild vine and honeysuckle, much of which was dead, and it had instantly caught fire and blazed on high like so much straw.

The Shawnees stood back, watching the effect of the accidental fire.

Kenewa put his finger on his lips—all could dimly see now—and, gliding rather than stepping, began a slow and cautious ascent of the slope.

It was time, for along the higher part of the bank the dry bushes had almost all been caught by the fire, and the ruthless element, which, driven by the fluttering breeze, poured vast columns of smoke forward, like an advanced guard.

The thick bushes sent forth a sputtering sound; the lofty trees groaned, as if in anguish, and the whole together gave vent to so loud a roar, that the fugitives were able to retreat without fear of discovery. Kenewa kept for some time ascending until he reached a kind of ridge, along which he then took his way, once more using all such precautions as were native to the Indian character.

They were now four in number; but, though well armed, no match in fight with overwhelming numbers. This the two white men knew, and though both longed for a brush with the foe, they had too much good sense to endanger the safety of their party, and the carrying out of their general plan of operations against the bandits, by any act of indiscretion.

At the end of about an hour they had succeeded in reaching a point whence they commanded a full view of the main stream below the final cataract, of the prairie to the south of the Pilot Rock, and of the Pilot Rock itself.

Kenewa intimated to his companions that at the foot of the slope there was a ford, which would enable them to cross the now placid mountain torrent, skirt the foot of the huge stony eminence, and thus gain the cavern by the secret passage, there to obtain that repose and refreshment of which they stood so much in need.

The slope was chiefly covered by stunted pines, the soil being stony and dry; but this tree offers less cover than any other.

This necessitated the most extreme caution in making the descent, which was effected in Indian file, the Huron chief taking the lead, as usual on all such occasions. Suddenly he halted and stooped low, the others imitating his example.

Steve and Tom crept along like serpents, until they were close to the young warrior's side.

"Well," said Steve.

"Shawnee there," replied Kenewa, pointing to a row of bushes, which completely ambushed the ford.

"Ambushed, by gum!" whispered the scout; "we must make tracks again."

"They have seen us," continued the Huron; "we must die with arms in our hands." "Blaze away at once, old boss," exclaimed Steve, carelessly; "but this child ain't a-going to vamoose just yet. Now, Injine, take a fool's advice, and fire the first shot."

Without waiting for the red-skin's answer, Steve, with a low chuckle, fired into the center of the bush indicated by Kenewa, who, with Tom, immediately followed his example. The Shawnees rose and rushed up the hill, to receive, the moment they came in sight of the opposite bank, another discharge of rifles, that sent them flying into the forest, without any attempt at retaliation, satisfied to carry off their killed and wounded.

In five minutes more the whole party were reunited, and made the best of their way up the stream, the intended path round the Pilot Rock being now too dangerous, as the whole Shawnee camp would be roused by the shots, which must have been distinctly heard by them.

Already they could see the white, sheen of the waterfall; the dark clouds had passed away from the sky, and though there was no moon, still the stars twinkled faintly and shed a dim light.

They heard the heavy clank of a horse's hoof upon the rocky path above, and then the animal came in sight, urged to its utmost speed, and bearing on its back Ella, who, waving her hand as if with wild delight, dashed through the torrent fall, and in two minutes appeared upon the other side.

A loud cry escaped all, though they stood still, as if spell-bound, and then Kenewa bounded in pursuit.

Then came the thunder of another hoof upon the still night air, and ere any one could restrain her, Ettie swept by, evidently in eager pursuit.

Did she hear them cry, or was it drowned in the roar of the cataract? It mattered little, for no answer came, and the next instant the two girls had disappeared. None hesitated to follow. The full measure of the catastrophe soon became visible.

A circle of savages had sprung up at the unexpected sound, and without difficulty had met the fugitives, who now sat upon their horses, prisoners of the Shawnees.

"My children—save my children!" cried the agonized father, in piercing tones.

"Forward," said Roland Edwardes, waving his rifle.

"My brothers are mad," observed Kenewa, coldly; "if you would save the pale-face beauties you must have the cunning of red-skins, not the rashness of pale-faces. Come."

And he led the way back toward the cavern.

There was one, however, who, after a whispered word from Kenewa, first lingered behind, and then took her way toward the enemy's camp; it was Matata, the Prairie Rose.

CHAPTER XIII.
THE MANIAC'S RIDE.

WHEN Kenewa left the cavern, on his scouting expedition, and also to meet his affianced bride, his absence was not noted for hours, and then it was only by Steve, who at once resolved to outlie in the woods, in the hope of aiding the Huron chief, to whom he was singularly attached.

Steve's adventures were neither many nor exciting. Having, by great exertions, clambered up the western bank of the stream, he had followed it slowly and cautiously, until he heard the shots which were fired on both sides while the contest on the island lasted.

He then, still using such precautions as were useful, ascended the stream, just in time to witness the young Huron, with an Indian girl in his company, push off from the island upon his frail and primitive raft of half-rotten logs.

Steve clutched his rifle, ready to cover his friend's landings, but his surprise and horror may be conceived, when he saw that the devoted couple were doomed to go over the rapids. The scout had great faith in the resources of his friend, but it did not appear to him possible that, incumbered by a helpless girl, he could so guide his unwieldy float as to land in safety.

The result we know.

The absence of the two most experienced runners on an outlying expedition, caused no uneasiness in the bosoms of the party left within the cavern. All knew them too well not to be aware that their departure from among them was for some good purpose. Scarcely anything was said, however, especially as Ettie and Martha came into their chamber and began making preparations for the morning meal, for they who habitually attend to such matters toil on even in the midst of suffering and sorrow.

Ella came, too, seeming to take a kind of childish delight in watching the progress of the nutritious meal which was being prepared.

The meal provided, Ettie had moved a little to one side with Ella, whose wants she attended to with tenderness.

Such had been the rapid course of events, the excitement of battle, and the whirl of thought connected with their immediate safety, that Roland Edwardes, though fearfully shocked, had had no leisure strictly to analyze his feelings.

Coming from a long journey over the broad Atlantic, full of hope and love, his horror at the state in which he found Ella may better be conceived than described.

Fierce hatred against the causes of his misfortune, a burning desire for revenge, had stifled at first all other emotions; but now, as he gazed upon that fearful wreck of beauty, innocence and loveliness, tender ideas passed through his mind.

That she could never be anything to him, he knew; nor, strangely enough, did he desire it.

It was more than a year since Roland Edwardes had seen Ella Mason, then in the very height of queenly beauty. His senses were first struck by the admirable perfection of her charms, heightened in a great degree in comparison with the childish beauty of her sister.

At twenty-one there could have been no doubt as to which Roland Edwardes would have chosen—most very young men being guided more by the eye than any moral consideration.

Now, he was influenced mainly by another feeling—new, absorbing and irresistible. It was the charm that hung, like a halo of love, beauty and innocence, around the younger sister.

Ettie had left quite a girl—she was now a woman, with eyes that beamed with intellectual fire.

Sorrow had celestialized her loveliness,

giving it some of that angelic tint which belongs to the Madonna of Raphael.

A new, a wild, an exquisite sensation sprung up in the young man's heart; and he knew, in this fatal hour, that what he had before experienced was merely passionate admiration, while what he now felt was real, genuine and pure love.

It was a terrible revelation to come to him at this time; but how could he repress it? He knew that he could not; but he resolved at all events to hide it—to bury it in the depths of his own bosom—until such time as it might be made known without impropriety or want of delicacy.

Then, with the inconsistency of love, he rose from the ground where he had been sitting, and approached the sisters.

Ella had finished her meal, and was gazing vacantly at the fire, which glowed in hot embers at her feet.

Ettie looked up sharply as she heard a step, smiled faintly as she perceived who it was, and then made way for him upon a log to seat himself by her side.

"Ettie, darling," he said, in tones which he vainly strove to make indifferent, "if you think so much of others and so little of yourself you will be ill, I am sure of it."

"I am ill, Roland—sick at heart," replied the young girl, sadly.

"I know you must be," said Roland, taking her hand in his; "but remember, Ella, has no support but you—for her sake, for your father's sake, for mine, be mindful of yourself. You have not tasted breakfast."

"I choke as I eat," she said, as the tears gushed from her lovely eyes in streams.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 55.)

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DREAMS.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

If you dream you're a toothpick enchanted,
Turning somersaults over your nose,
It's a sign that your lover loves you.
If he don't, then tell me who does?

If you dream that you are your own cousin,
Baked up in a nice custard pie,
It's a sign you'll marry a husband.
If you don't, then I'd like to know why?

To dream of three rattle-tail bullfrogs,
Talking Dutch over three mugs of beer,
Is a sign that to die you are destined.
If you don't, it will be rather queer.

To dream that you never told falsehoods,
And get to believing it's true,
Is a sign that you'll get some money.
If you don't, then I'm sorry for you.

To dream of a steam-driven windmill,
Boiled down and made in a shoe,
Is a sign that your enemy hates you.
If he don't, then what does he do?

To dream of snoring a snare-drum,
And seeing a shaving-horse trot,
Is a sign that you'll be unlucky.
And 'twould be mighty odd if you don't.

To dream that you can't tell the difference
Between a sty in your eye and a star,
Is a sign that you'll go on a journey.
If not, then you'll stay where you are.

Yet in these dreams and their meanings,
If you find that the truth is quite small,
Set me down as a poor fortune-teller,
And say that I lie—and that's all.

Nethoto's Wooing.

BY CAPT. CHARLES HOWARD.

"The oriole of the Wyandots would breathe a word into the ears of the White Rose."

The beautiful white girl smiled upon her red companion, and lowered her head until the Indian's crimson lips touched her ear.

She thought Lucepa wished to speak of her approaching marriage with Nethoto, the brave and merciful wolf of the Wyandots.

And, therefore, totally unexpected were the words that assailed her ears.

"Nethoto does not love Lucepa, the oriole of the Wyandots; his heart has flown to the bosom of the White Rose."

"What?" cried the white girl, almost starting to her feet, but quickly recovering.

"Ah! you do but jest, Lucepa. Nethoto can love no other bird than the beautiful singing oriole of his people."

A cloud settled upon the Indian's brow.

"Last night," he said, sadly, "Nethoto and Lucepa walked the shores of the little lake. Nethoto said that the oriole should never sing before the door of his lodge, that there he had sworn, by Kai Ja Mainitow, to transplant the White Rose of the pale-faces."

"Which he will never do!" said the white girl, with a firmness that pleased her red companion.

"The oriole of the Wyandots will sing for the White Rose for her words," said the Indian, gazing thankfully into the azure eyes of the trapper's daughter. "Lucepa loves the wolf of her brethren; she would warm his lodge, but, alas! he loves her not. Did he ever whisper to the White Rose of love?"

"Never, Lucepa."

"He will when a good opportunity crosses his trail."

"To learn that the heart he seeks is another's."

"Then the White Rose loves?"

"Yes, beautiful Wyandot," said Winnetta, blushing, as her thoughts flew to her absent lover.

"Tis well that Nethoto knows it not. Did he, his knife would seek his rival's heart; he would never rest until he was rivalless."

"Then, for Heaven's sake, tell him not, Lucepa," cried the maiden, her thoughts recurring to the revengeful nature of the chief.

"Lucepa's tongue will sleep," was the assuring reply.

A few minutes later they separated.

"I can hardly believe that the ferocious savage, who has often eaten of our salt, possesses the audacity to insult me with a proposal of marriage," murmured the white girl, as she walked toward her father's cabin.

"But, should he do so, I will curb my indignation and reject him calmly, for kind words are valuable when savages are itching to unearthen the hatchet, and bury it again in the brain of the whites."

A noise among the leaves in Winnetta's rear attracted her attention; but she perceived no living thing upon looking around.

When she resumed her walk, a giant Indian stepped from behind a tree.

It was Nethoto.

"So the White Rose loves," he hissed, having listened to the conversation between Winnetta and the beautiful Wyandot—"loves a face pale as her own. But she shall never warm his lodge. She shall warm Nethoto's, or become as cold as the stones."

Then he continued to gaze, in silence, upon the maiden, until her form lost itself to his view.

Days passed without Nethoto appearing to Winnetta. She took long strolls through the wood, and upon the eastern confines of Lake St. Clair, a short distance from which the trapper's cabin stood, without encountering the red-skin.

She had informed her father of Lucepa's communication; but the trapper, for once indiscreet, put no faith in it, and laughed at the thought of his fair-skinned daughter having a red lover.

One mild day in mid-autumn Winnetta found herself seated at the foot of an umbrageous tree, which stood but a few steps from the water's edge.

As she gazed across the almost rippleless lakelet, a canoe, with a single occupant, crossed her line of vision.

At first it seemed becalmed like a vessel upon a mirrored sea; but she soon perceived that it was rapidly approaching her. She did not move, but continued to gaze upon the boat, anxious to know who plied the oars so deftly.

Nearer and nearer shot the canoe with the speed of an arrow, and not until it had grounded upon the beach, almost at her very feet, did the trapper's sunlight recognize the rower.

Nethoto!

The Wyandot sprung from the stranded bark and hurried toward Winnetta, who, disdaining flight, was calmly noting his movements.

"The White Rose blooms on the shore of the little water," began the chief, pausing before the girl.

"Yes," was the reply, couched in gentle tones. "How blows the wind over the lodges of the Wyandots?"

Gently, gently," answered Nethoto; "but the wolf left his lair to seek his—his—"

"Prey," smiled Winnetta.

"No, no, his mate!" exclaimed the chief. "For many moons the White Rose has been the brightest star in Nethoto's sky. When the Wyandots worship the Great Spirit, Nethoto worships his star—which is, on earth, a matchless white rose. Now Nethoto asks the hunter's daughter to become his squaw, to warm his lodge when the long winter comes."

As the Indian finished, he receded a pace, and gazed upon Winnetta, with folded arms.

The wily dog! he knew that Winnetta would refuse to become his bride—to do the work his lazy spirit laughed at.

The maiden's reply was a carefully studied one. She merely said:

"The White Rose prefers to bloom at her father's door."

Ungovernable rage took immediate and entire possession of Nethoto's heart. His keen hunting-knife flew from beneath his ornamented robe, and he stepped forward, murderously inclined.

"The White Rose lies!" he shouted, at the top of his passionate voice. "She loves a white-livered dog, whom Nethoto would not deign to kick. The dog may live, but his mate shall die—Watchementoc calls for her spirit!"

The angry Wyandot's onward strides were brought to an abrupt termination by a loaded pistol, which Winnetta had drawn from the folds of her dress. She had secretly carried the weapon since Lucepa's warning, with the determination to use it should Nethoto attempt violence.

The baffled savage recoiled from the dangerous weapon, and gazed with all the ferocity of the tameless tiger into the beautiful but stern face of the heroic girl.

The life of the fiend was at Winnetta's disposal, but she abominated the thought of shedding blood, even a savage's.

Nethoto continued to eye her, expecting any moment to be ushered into the august presence of the Great Spirit, till the fair victor pointed toward his canoe.

"Nethoto is free to seek his people," she said, calmly. "The White Rose refuses to spill a dog's blood. The canoe waits for its wicked master. Go."

With a parting look of withering hate, and a horrible imprecation, Nethoto turned on his heel, and bounded toward the lake. Springing into his canoe, he shot from the shore, delivering himself of a startling whoop of vengeance.

While the would-be-murderer's features

runs through 'em, an' it bein' in the winter thar wur lots uv snow on the mountains.

"It hed been snowin' purty much all thet month, an' then ther' hed kin a thaw-like, an' then it hed frozed up ag'in tighter ner bark onto a beech tree."

"The whole face of the airth wur jess like a big pond w' ice onto it, the snow wur so hard an' slickery, an' I r'ally do believe thet it would 'a hilt up the biggest kind uv a hoss."

"Well, the Injuns started at daybreak the mornin' arter ropin' me in, an' traveled all thet day an' purty well into the night afore they halted fur camp."

"All day I hed been a-puzzlin' an' thinkin' 'bout how I wur to leave these imps, but nary a chance hed I durin' the day, an' I didn't think, fust off, thet thar wur goin' to be enny durin' the night."

"But a feller don't never know what's a-goin' to happen till it does happen, an' so I didn't calkerlate on doin' much to'ards gittin' cl'ar thet night, nohow."

"The place whar the Sioux hed halted wur in a sheltered kind uv a valley, whar the snow hed drifted powerful, half way up the trees amongst which the fire wur built, but perfectly level an' jess es hard es a dormick on top."

"Ther' wurn't the least bit uv danger uv bu'stin' through, not even whur the fire wur a-blayin' away."

"The way I wur fixed wur jess like this. Ther' firearms ag'in' a big pine, an' a-facin' east'ard. Jess above it the Injuns all lay in a row like, the'r hoofs into the fire, an' me atween the two middle 'uns. A leetle way off, on t'other side uv the tree, the ground fell away suddently, leavin' a kind uv a gully like, whar the snow wurn't apperently es deep es twur higher up whar we wur."

"You see, lad, I hev to tell yur these little things so's you'll understand how I kin to foolish them Injuns the way I did."

"The two cusses es lay alongside uv me, wur a powerful long time goin' to sleep, but by 'm-by they drapped off, an' begin snorin' wuss'n n'er a mustang w' the glanders."

"When I see they wur gone fur good, I twisted over onto one side, an' backin' up elust to the big Injun I made out to git my fingers, you know my hands wur roped behind me, onto the haft uv his skulpin'-knife an' drewed her out."

"Arter thet the thing wur cl'ar enuff."

"I druped the blade into the snow an' sawed the ropes ag'in' the edge till they parted, an' then my hands wur free."

"But I a'most forgot to tell yur how I fixed the hole whar I fust kin down."

"Yur see, es fast es I dug out the snow I showed it back into the hole, an' purty soon I hed it chock full, an' a heapsoilder nor it wur afore I teched it."

"The Injuns mout walk all over the place an' it would bar 'em I knowed."

"Well at last I struck the hard crust on the side uv the gully, an' here I cut another chunk, clean an' smooth, an' crep' out."

"Bein' down in the wash I wur out o' sight uv the Injuns, an' arter puttin' the chunk back ag'in, I lit out from them diggin's, an' by daylight wur halfway back to the camp."

"I sw'ar I wur a'most willin' to take the risk an' lay by some whar jess to see what them red-skins would do when they woke up in the mornin'."

"Lordy, how they must hev cavorted an' tore around when they see I wur gone, an' how the imp must 'a' cussed when he found his rifle wur missin'!"

"I'd 'a' liked powerful to hev seen 'em, but I darsen't risk it, an' 'twur best I didn't."

"Well, like," I said, "that's a pretty tough one. I should have thought the Indians would hear you at work."

"Why bless you, lad, I didn't make es much racket es a wood-house would 'a' done in travelin' around. Fust chance yur git yur jess try yur knife onto a snow crust an' see how easy it ar'. No, sir; they mout 'a' been wide awake, an' ef the'r backs wur turned, they wouldn't 'a' heard me."

Fighting With Fire.

BY CAPT. BRUIN ADAMS.

It was toward the close of a day in the latter part of the fall, that Jim Curtis, the well-known ranger, and myself were pushing rapidly ahead across one of those immense reaches of prairie lying south of Llano Estacado, hoping to reach timber some time in the earlier part of the night.

The day's drive had been a hard one, and our mustangs were, to use the expressive phrase, well "knocked up," and it is a well-known fact that when one of these hardy animals does give out, he does so in every sense of the word. They become utterly useless for all purposes of swift progress. They rarely show signs of fatigue until completely exhausted, and then the breakdown is very sudden.



NETHOTO'S WOOING.

were still discernible, a young hunter sprung to Winnetta's side. Glancing from the maiden's pistol to the retreating red-skin, he comprehended the situation, and his rifle flew to his shoulder.

The next instant Nethoto's heart was covered by the hunter's aim.

All at once Winnetta sprung forward and clutched her lover's arm.

"George, George!" she cried, "spare him, for Lucepa's sake."

"Lucepa's?"

"Yes; she put me on my guard."

The weapon was lowered and Nethoto's deserved fate postponed.

Arrived at the Indian village, this red demon stirred up the Wyandots against the white and a bloody war was the result.

But before the war-cloud burst, the inmates of the cabin near the lake escaped to a place of safety, and during the sanguinary struggle, Nethoto, the unsuccessful wooer, fell before his rival's rifle.

Camp-Fire Yarns.

How Ike Bundy "foolished" the Sioux.

BY RALPH RINGWOOD.

"I DIDN'T never tell yur how I foolished them Sioux up on Boisee river, did I boy-ee?" asked old Ike Bundy, who was sitting alongside the fire polishing a rib he had just roasted.

"No, Ike, I don't think you ever did," I replied. "How was it that you foolished them?"

"Wur the durndest, cutest piece uv work es ever I performed, an' 'now well did ef I do say it myself," he replied.

"Yer see I hed been onfortunit enough to let the imps git ther' claws onto me, an' arter I kem to, hev'in' been knocked onto the head, I found I wur roped up neck an' heels."

"Ther' wur five uv 'em, Sioux, an' on the war-path, at thet. An' es I lay clust by on my back, like a kerfumed turtle, I hear the imps a-talkin' an' palaverin' es to what they shed do w' me. Sum went fur skulpin' right away an' t'others wur fur waitin' till they struck the main body an' then hev a big roasin'."

"These here fellers held the biggest hand, an' out-trumped the others, an' so I wur saved the skulpin' jess then, ennyway."

"The spot whar I wur captivated wur up in the Boisee hills, yur know Big Snake river

"Yur know, Ralph, my boyee, thet a man kin do lots when he's got his hands to work with, an' so 'twurn't long afore my feet wur cl'ar, an' thar wurn't nothin' left but to git."

"But gittin' wur the hardest part uv the bizness."

"Ef I riz up an' started to creep out, the chances wur ag'in' me, ten to one. They'd be en'ca'most sartin' to wake up. An' then the game wur played."

"An' so I jess lay still a bit an' think the matter over, an' all at onc't I see a plan es I thought 'd work ef I could o'ny work it."

"The Injuns wur a-layin' tu clust together, an' so I stretched out ag'in, nateral like, an' rolled ag'in' one uv 'em."

"The cussed varmint growled an' grunted, but he went over on t'other side, wide awake to be shore, but never onc't thinkin' I wur loose."

"Then I waited ag'in till he begin snorin', an' then went to work."

"I sorter riz onto my elbow, an' usin' the Injun's knife, I cut out a smart chunk uv the frozed snow, an' shoved it a leetle way off."

"The chunk wur about three foot long, an' a foot an' a half wide, leavin' a hole down to the soft snow big enuff fur me to scrouge into."

"Ur bet I wurn't long in gittin' into it neither. An' arter I hed scraped an' packed the snow round till I hed a smart hole to turn in, I jess re'ched up, an' drawin' in one uv the niggers' rifles what lay alongside, I pulled the chunk uv hard snow back whar it b'longed an' wur safe es a perrairy-dog in his hole."

"Oh, come now, Ike, that won't do, nohow!" exclaimed one of the group, who had gathered around. "What was to hinder them Injuns liftin' yur out ag'in' in the mornin'?"

"Ye durned jackass, ther' wurn't nothin' to purvent 'em, that ar' ef I hed a-stayed ther', but I didn't, yur see. No, siree, nary onc't."

"Well, lad," he continued, still addressing me, "yur kin understand thet I now hed a leetle room to work in, an' I tell yur, thet a groun'-hog wurn't a patchin' to way I grambled through thet snow."

"Twur dry an' light, an' I could pack a lot uv it es big es a bar'l into a'most nothin' at all. Why I sw'ar I could 'most crawl through it."

"I hed took keer to git the right direct-shun, an' arter a couple uv hours' scrougin' an' pushin' I found thet I wur gittin' elost to the edge uv the gully, es I hev told yur 'bout."

Such was the condition, or nearly so, of our animals on the occasion of which I speak.

"This 'll never make the willow spring, cap'n, not even by daylight to-morrer mornin'," said Curtis, impatiently. "We hev got to rest the mustangs an hour or two, an' then try it ag'in."

There were signs of a "norther" hanging along the horizon, and the prospect of having it cut out on the open was not a very pleasing one.

The wind was already coming down in fitful gusts, and pretty soon it had settled down to a steady blow, *avant courier* of the coming storm.

I had dismounted, and had my hand upon the girth, when a slight exclamation drew my attention to the ranger, who was yet in the saddle.

He was leaning over the side of his pony, shading his eyes from the rays of the setting sun, and gazing, intently, off to the southward.

"What is it, Jim?" I asked.

For several moments he made no reply; then, suddenly turning, he pointed in the direction he had been looking and pronounced the single word:

"Comanch'!"

I knew he never spoke without being certain of what he said, and hence I knew that the Indians were there.

The ranger had again resumed his scrutiny, and for several minutes he continued to do so.

"Thet ar' a whoppin' big party, cap'n," he said, "an' they'r a-barin' down onto us like that breeze as es comin' from the Rockies. We hev got to dig outen this."

"But, Jim," I replied, "the horses can't or won't strike even a lope. They are no good."

"They must travel," he exclaimed, "er our ha'r won't stay whar it is long, I tell you. Mount, cap'n, an' use the steel like durnation."

I was in the saddle at a jump, and for something like a quarter of an hour we managed to get a sharp gallop out of the weary animals. At the expiration of that time, they fell into a slow labored lope, and then into a walk, from which nothing could move them.

During this time the Comanches were rapidly closing in, and were now sighted less than a mile distant. They had sighted us long since, and we could see them busy handling their rifles and bows for present use.

The wind had likewise increased rapidly, and was now blowing with such force as to almost unsettle us.

"By the soul o' Crockett!" exclaimed Curtis, suddenly jerking up and leaping to the ground, "ef we can't fight the skunks one way we kin anuther! Down, cap'n, quick! an' pull grass fur yur life!"

"Fire?" I said, in a questioning tone, as I obeyed the ranger's injunction.

"Nothin' shorter! An' ef we kin cl'ar two foot afore the imps git in range, we've got 'em foul."

For a time we both worked as men only can work whose lives are in the balance. The tall, dry grass and weeds "fairly flew," as Curtis afterward described it. As fast as we pulled them up by handfuls, they were thrown as far forward, or with the wind, as we could cast, and in less time than either of us had dared hope, we had a space sufficient for our purpose.

"Pull away, cap'n," said Curtis, "while I fixes the match," and with a skill and rapidity that showed it was not the first time, the ranger had made all preparations to fire the grass at a moment's notice.

"How close?" he asked, looking up from where he was kneeling over the pile of powder, dry grass and weeds he had placed at the edge of the standing grass.

"About four hundred yards," I answered.

"Thet'll do! Hyer she goes!" and snatching a pistol from his belt, Curtis placed the muzzle close to the "match" and pulled trigger.

A bright flash followed the report; a whirling column of smoke was instantly borne off on the wind; a column of flame leaped up, and with a sudden, rushing, roaring sound, the greedy fire darted out into the inflammable mass, and was off like a rocket before the blast.

In front, on right and left, the lurid flame sped with amazing swiftness. We drew back to the furthest side of the cleared space and cowered to the earth. The mustangs snorted with terror and pain, but stood perfectly still, trembling in every limb.

It was a fearful sight, but, while gazing upon it, we knew that it was our salvation.

Two hours later we resumed our journey over the blackened earth. Here and there the charred remains of horses, mingling with other debris, among which we occasionally discovered a skull, an arm or thigh-bone, told the story of the awful death that had smitten the Comanche war-party.

Beat Time's Notes.

ROBBING a man on the road is considered a very highway of robbery. I was returning from a visit to the country the other night on foot, and just as I got to a lonely bend in the road, out stepped a man with an unexpected presentation of two pistols and demanded my money or my note; but as I never carry money when I am out of town, nor even when I am in town, the request smacked of the ridiculous. Then he caught me by the throat, thereby muzzling my guzzle, and with his other hand he bound my hands over to keep the peace, and proceeded to relieve me of every thing I had, with the exception of a severe pain in the side. I didn't care so much about the loss of my watch, for if anybody deserved to have it he certainly did, for it is so mean that time won't have any thing to do with it, and it is not even right once in twenty-four hours; but I hated to lose the three chickens, and the four heads of cabbage, and the sack of corn, because that much produce is not to be got every day—or night. The pumpkins I could spare. The eggs in my hat he damaged when he knocked it down over my eyes, and the little pig got out from under my arm during the scuffle and ran away, but the goose under my other arm got choked to death. He would even have taken a three-thousand dollar diamond ring off my finger if one had been on it, and I was very glad that he did not discover a check for six thousand four hundred and twenty-three dollars and some cents in my inside vest-pocket, but I was very sorry that I couldn't discover it myself. I sat there and saw him load himself down with my plunder and go off up the hill with it very leisurely; then I started sorrowfully for home, thinking if I ever went to the country again I would go to the navy yard and borrow a full-sized frigate to take along.

THE wonders of the microscope can never be fully chronicled. I examined a boarding-house pie with one lately, and found it to contain a piece of last week's newspaper, no lard, very little sugar, a piece of string, a little meat, less apples, no spice, some real fine bones, and nothing of any thing else; called, according to the waiter, mince-ple—I only minced at it.

Then I examined a cup of tea, but failed to detect the presence of any tea in it, any more than that which would come from boiling pieces of the box in which tea was shipped; while in a cup of coffee I detected the influence of a couple of grains of coffee which had got into the coffee-pot by mistake, but they were not enough to hurt the taste. I discovered the presence of wet weather in the milk, and the absence of youth from the butter, although the regular boarders say they can tell all these things with the naked eye, which is, I think, a bare fact. I looked at all my good qualities, and was surprised—I had no idea they were so large. I have a notion of buying a number of microscopes for my friends to look at me with, providing they don't look at my faults.

I HAVE heard of men in a pinch falling back on their reputations, but there are some who, if they got into a pinch and would attempt to fall back on their reputations, would be very apt to lie pretty flat on the ground.

A BLOODY partner in a fight is an ally-gory.

"YOUR milk of human kindness would make ice-cream," as the beggar said to a stingy man.

"You are stubborn as a donkey," said the teacher. "Yes, I go to school to one," said the scholar.

ONE good hard head is better than any two soft hearts any day, whether you believe it or not.

MANY words in the English language are spelt oddly merely for the purpose of making fun at spelling matches, and that's all. The idea of such spells as Phthisic, Phthyme, Thphlegm, Pnemoniaks, Qnemonia, Balm, Dalm, Scizzors, Diaphram, Knaw, Knat, Gnot, Wendsday, etc., etc., is all bosh. They ot to get some learnt man to altar the spelling-book. BEAT TIME.